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DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

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The Protestant Episcopal Church

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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Nos. 6 & 7.

FRANCIS L. HAWKS, D. D., LL. D.,
WILLIAM STEVENS PERRY, A. M.,

EDITORS.

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THE CHURCH MONTHLY, For 1863.

MANY having complained of the inconvenience of the former shape of the "Monthly," for mailing, reading and binding, we have changed to the usual magazine size, giving sixty octavo pages in each number, instead of thirty-two pages of the other form.

The Table of Contents of each number will give the name of the author of each article, except in cases where it may not be desirable, or not known.

The "Monthly," for 1863, will be edited by

REV. F. D. HUNTINGTON, D. D., and

REV. GEORGE M. RANDALL, D. D.,

assisted by many of the best writers in the Church.

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[*Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Secretary.*]

Stratford, November 20th, 1729.

Reverend Sir,

I am very thankful to the honourable Society for admitting Mr. Dwight into their service, though I could have been glad had he been fixed somewhere else in New-England, particularly since Brook-Haven was supplied before, (and I hope to their content.) We are all sorry that he had not been placed at Providence, where it is to be feared not only the interest of the Church, but even all sense of religion, (what little there was of it,) will in a manner be lost, by means of the bad character and vile behaviour of the person who is missionary in that place, and upon whose account the Church is sadly dishonoured and we are all filled with shame and confusion of face.

I find in the abstract of the proceedings of the Society last year, mention made of a salary for a school at Stratford, but have never received any letter, or otherwise any intimation from the honourable Society about it; which makes me fear there was some mistake about the matter. However, though I should be very thankful if there was a salary appointed for that purpose, and there is great need of it, yet since we want ministers more, of the two, than schoolmasters, I would not desire that the providing for a school should stand in the way of providing for missionaries, and particularly, not only Mr. Caner stands in need of an augmentation of his salary, but there is New-London, in this colony, and Westerly, in the Narragansetts, (in both which places they have built and are finishing very handsome small Churches,) that are in great necessity of ministers, and I have this summer visited them, and find a good prospect of great increase to the Church.

Besides which places, I have not long since visited the people on Connecticut River, and find a considerable number who are subscribing towards a Church at a town called Wethersfield, where there is likely to be a flourishing

colony, and will need the honourable Society's assistance. I likewise still continue frequently to preach at New-Haven, Ripton and Newtown with success; though, at the last of these places, it must be confessed that the Dissenters have of late got the advantage of us, partly by the craft and assiduity of their teachers, and partly by means of the removing of a considerable man of our Church, (whose influence used to be great in that town,) from thence into New-York government.

The Church here at Stratford has of late been unhappy by means of a foolish contention, that has sprung up among my people, to the great hindrance of the growth of the Church, and has given me a great deal of trouble. However, I have had some success, having baptised one adult and twelve infants, one of which was native, and admitted six to the Holy Communion since last April, otherwise my *notitia parochialis* stands much as it did in my last.

Sir, yours, &c., &c.,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[The Churchwardens, &c., of Wallingford to the Bishop of London.]

May it please your Lordship,

We, the Churchwardens and parishioners of Wallingford and the adjacent parts in the Colony of Connecticut, in New-England, beg leave to offer our humble duty to your Lordship.

We are a Church but newly planted, and however content we are at present to have the service of the Church only once a quarter by a minister, on every Lord's day besides we perform the service as far as is proper for laymen; but in that part we are something deficient for want of sermon books, &c., which we cannot easily procure in this country. We are sensible the Reverend Theodore Morris cannot leave his other parishes oftener, yet we hope God, in his providence, will so order it, that we may at last be oftener attended; there are many ready to join in our communion, and have

nothing to object to it, but our having service so seldom by a minister. We greatly rejoice that we are assisted in learning to know which is the true Church of Christ, and the manner how we ought worship. But with melancholy hearts we crave your Lordship's patience, while we recite that divers of us have been imprisoned, and our goods from year to year distrained from us for taxes, levied for the building and supporting meeting-houses; and divers actions are now depending in our courts of law in the like cases. And when we have petitioned our governor for redress, notifying to him the repugnance of such actions to the laws England, he hath proved a strong opponent to us; but when the other party hath applied to him for advice how to proceed against us, he hath lately given his sentence "to enlarge the goal and fill it with them," (that is, the Church.) But we supplicate both God and man that our persecutors may not always prevail against us.

And now, that God may bless your Lordship, and the charitable endeavours of the honourable Society, and enable them to send more labourers to a harvest truly plentiful, is the sincere prayer of

Your Lordship's

Most dutiful and obedient servants,

THOMAS IVES, } *Churchwardens.*
NORTH INGHAM, }

EBENEZER WAINWRIGHT,

SHADRACK SEAGAR,

JOHN BELLAMY,

THOMAS DEWLITTLE,

WAITSTILL ABINATHER,

AARON TUTTLE,

PHINEAS IVES,

MATTHEW BELLAMY,

EBENEZER BLAKESLEE,

ENOS SMITH,

JOHN MEKY,

THOMAS WILLIAMS,

GEORGE FISHER.

[*Inhabitants of New-London to the Secretary.*]

April 13th, 1730.

Reverend Sir,

We, the underwritten inhabitants of New-London, Groton, and other places adjacent, having once and again petitioned the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts for a missionary, beg leave, by you, to renew that, our most earnest request.

We have, at a very great expense, erected us a Church, which (unless when Mr. McSparran visits us) continues shut up, to the derision of its enemies, but to our great grief and discomfort, with this only abatement, that it stands a monument and witness for us, how earnestly we desire the blessing we now pray for.

Mr. Samuel Seabury, a gentleman born and bred in this country, goes home recommended to the notice of the Bishop of London and the Society, by the clergy here; therefore, he may be sure of a welcome reception in what vacancy soever he is sent to fill in New-England, where he is known, so we beg (with all the importunity, the utmost necessity, and most earnest desire of a Gospel minister among us is able to inspire) our destitute condition may come in remembrance at the Board, when that gentleman applies for a mission.

We are, Reverend Sir, &c.

[*Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Secretary.*]

Stratford, New-England, May 5th, 1730.

Reverend Sir,

This comes to the honourable Board by Mr. Samuel Seabury, who has been educated and graduated in the colleges in this country, and has led a sober, virtuous and studious life, and now heartily embraces the principles of the Church of Eng-

land, and is sincerely well affected to the present government, and desirous to devote himself to the service of the honourable Society; and, I doubt not, but if they shall see cause to employ him, they will find him faithful in the discharge of his duty wherever they shall please to send him. There are several places here, in New-England, that much need to be supplied, particularly Providence, Westerly and New-London, in either of which he is well known, and will be very acceptable.

I have visited several places in the government, since my last, and find a growing disposition toward the Church, particularly at Greenwich, where the Rev'd Mr. Canes hath laboured with good success; and there seems to be a good prospect that the whole parish, which never have had any minister of any denomination settled among them there, will come into the Church.

Nothing remarkable has happened in my parish since my last; one family has been added to our number, and one, likewise, has removed from us into New-York government. I have reason to fear that my last letter, of November 15th, miscarried, and therefore I have set down my Notitia Parochialis.

- | | | |
|------|---|-----|
| 1st. | No. of inhabitants in this town,..... | 270 |
| | Families of which belong to the Church,..... | 53 |
| | Beside those that belong to the neighbouring vil- | |
| | lages. | |
| 2d. | No. of the baptised since the mission here,..... | 250 |
| | Of which, this year, were baptised,..... | 20 |
| | Of which one only was adult. | |
| 3d. | No. of communicants here in the neighbourhood,. | 89 |
| | Of which were admitted this year,..... | 9 |
| 4th. | No. of professors of the Church, about..... | 200 |
| | Beside many in the neighbouring towns. | |
| 5th. | No. of heathens uncertain, because of their fre- | |
| | quent changing their habitations. | |

I am, Reverend Sir, &c.,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[*Rev. Mr. McSparran to the Secretary.*]

Narragansett, May 20, 1730.

Rev. Sir,

Mr. Samuel Seabury, at whose hands you will receive this, was educated at the seminaries of learning here, and did, for some time, preach to the Dissenters, by whom he is well reported of for a virtuous conversation. He has, for some time past, conformed to our Church, and, manifesting a desire of going upon the Society's mission, I thought it became me to encourage a person of his merit by recommending him to the Society's notice. The place of his birth and most intimate acquaintance is Groton, in the neighbourhood of New-London, which I thought proper to observe, in hopes that it might prove an inducement to determine his mission to that place, where a minister is exceedingly wanted. Your letter of the 19th November last came too late to my hands to be communicated to the gentlemen of New-London in time to have their answers transmitted by this conveyance. I am but a few days returned from that place, where I preached, and saw them renew an address for a minister; but shall do my endeavours, when I go again, (if not before,) to bring them together, in order more fully to answer the Society's expectations. In the mean time I beg leave to observe, that beside the forty odd pounds they have subscribed, there will arise upon these subscribers a ministerial rate, due to the established Presbyterian minister, of at least twenty pounds per annum, but which, by a particular act of the Colony of Connecticut, is transferred upon the Episcopal minister, where one resides, which quota of sixty pounds is triple the sum their neighbours pay, and is in a much greater disproportion to what is paid by the members of the Church of England in this government, (numbers and abilities considered.)

I thank God my Church thrives, and those that attend the established worship are, with a few exceptions, persons of good conversation. But I cannot give a better instance of the suc-

cess God has given me, than to take notice to the Society that, since my incumbency, I have baptised one hundred and seventy-six persons, whereof sixty are adults, and that the communicants are still increasing.

I am, Reverend Sir, &c.,

JAMES McSPARRAN.

[Rev. Mr. Caner to the Secretary.]

Fairfield, New-England. Sept. 18th, 1730.

Sir,

In my last letter, dated on Easter Monday, I laid before the honourable Society my own as well as my people's hearty thanks for their care and bounty relating to the increase of my salary. The churchwardens and vestry, I there informed the honourable Society, desired some time to try the purses as well as the readiness of the people to advance the sum expected of them. Their accounts they have now brought in, and do find the utmost willingness in the people to comply with any proposals consistent with their abilities, which the churchwardens find to be very slender, and not answerable to the honourable Society's expectation from them.

The truth is, there doth appear in the people a great forwardness to hearken to instruction, and they seem really willing to contribute the utmost they are able to the support of those means whereby they receive it. But the number of those who have actually reconciled themselves to our constitution is yet but small; there are greater numbers come to us as Nicodemus to our blessed Saviour, and whom, therefore, the others are not willing to discourage, by representing the great difficulties that will ensue upon their joining with us, but are rather willing to bear a greater burden themselves than fright them back by severe proposals.

The utmost they do declare themselves able to raise, is fifteen pounds sterling per annum; though, to balance this, they have set on foot a design which I am confident in some years

will enable them to maintain a missionary themselves. It is this, that every professor do, in his will, make over a certain sum (what he sees fit) to the support of this particular Church, to be paid at his decease, which sum being secured, the churchwardens have power to use the interest of it to any purposes the Church shall think fit to order. There have deceased two members of our Church since this design hath been laid, each of which hath left one hundred pounds to the advancement of it, and two others, supposed at the point of death, have ordered, the one an hundred, and the other fifty pounds, in their wills, though both of them are since recovered.

Now, I presume it is easy to see that this thing, having due encouragement, will, in the compass of some years, enable them to maintain their own ministers, and do therefore declare that they will, from time to time, as they prove able, give notice of it to the honourable Society, that the salary which may be now afforded, may gradually be transferred to others who may then be in their present circumstances; that is, unable to help themselves.

The particular state of my parish the honourable Society will best be informed of from my *Notitia Parochialis*, herein enclosed, from which the honourable Society will, I hope, see encouragement sufficient to induce them to continue, if not add, further favours to my people. I believe, in our present circumstances, they could not be more acceptable to them and the honourable Society's most dutiful and obedient servant, as well as, Sir, &c.,

HENRY CANER.

NOTITIA PAROCHIALIS.

1. Number of inhabitants, upwards of 8,000. 2. Number of baptised, about 7,140. 3. Number baptised by me this half year, 30; adults 10—blacks 2, Indian 1, whites 7; infants 20—whites 18, Indians 2. 4. Number of actual communicants of the Church of England, 65. 5. Number of those who profess themselves of the Church of England, about 500 in all the parishes. 6. Number of heathens and infidels, about 40. 7. Number of converts from a profane life, 4.

[Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Secretary.]

Stratford, in Connecticut, October 25th, 1730.

Reverend Sir,

I have but little to write in respect to my charge since my last, though I think my Church is more frequented by Dissenters, who, many of them, come once in a while to Church, yet I cannot say there have been any thoroughly reclaimed within this half year; however, a good temper toward the Church still very sensibly increases, and upon Connecticut River they are contriving to build a Church. One thing I have particularly to rejoice in, and that is, that I have a very considerable influence in the College in my neighbourhood; and that a love to the Church gains ground greatly in it. Several young men that are graduates, and some young ministers, I have prevailed with to read and consider the matter so far, that they are very uneasy out of the communion of the Church, and some seem much disposed to come into her service; and those that are best affected to the Church are the brightest and most studious of any that are educated in the country.

Many poor people complain of the want of Prayer-Books and Expositions of the Church Catechism; I should, therefore, be very thankful if the honourable Society would be pleased to order a few of them to be sent to me, and if, with them, I had a few Ostervald's Catechisms and Whole Duties of Man, I could make them very useful. I desire that if any Prayer-Books are sent, that they may have Tate and Brady's Psalms bound up with them; they only are used among us.

I am, Reverend Sir, &c.,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[*Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

Stratford, 2d June, 1731.

Reverend Sir,

Since my last there has happened an unfortunate alteration in my parish, by the loss of a worthy parishioner, Mr. Loring, who was the most considerable person of any influence we had among us; the most able and the most forward in promoting the interests of the Church, and always at the head of every good design; for want of whom, I doubt the Church here will greatly suffer and languish, for his example and influence had the greatest hand in its advancement, the rest being generally poor tradesmen, and, consequently, apt to be despised and dispirited.

However, I have had one or two new converts, and especially one, from a loose irregular way of living, to a life of virtue and industry; and our Church is not less, if any thing, more frequented, and, in the villages, it remains much as it was.

New-London I think well provided for in Mr. Seabury, and I hope the Church will flourish in that town. I have laboured much to promote the Church at Westerly Narragansett, as I have occasionally passed that way; but for the want of a resident minister, I doubt, through the multitude of sectaries that abound in those parts, and a prevailing spirit of irreligion and profaneness, the Church's interest will decay among them, where the means of religion, of any sort, are so much wanted, that they are truly the objects of the greatest compassion.

I have visited Brook-Haven, on Long Island, since the departure of Mr. Campbell, and find them almost sinking under the wounds they have received by the frequent changes of ministers, and the non-good conduct of some that have been among them. However, I preached to a considerable congregation, and afterwards called their vestry together, who desired me to express their humblest gratitude to the

honourable Society, that they have been allowed an interest in their charity, and earnestly desire that it may be continued, and that they may be still reckoned among the Society's dependents. But, for fear of being disappointed, as they were before of Mr. Dwight, they humbly desire the Society not to send them another missionary till they shall find some young gentleman to send from these parts, whom they have known before and he them, that they may have a future prospect of mutual liking, and so not be under any temptation of parting again suddenly, as the case has been.

They desire me to look out a young man to reside awhile among them. I mentioned a virtuous and discreet young man and of good abilities, whose name is Brown, (brother to that excellent person who went home for orders with Dr. Cutler and myself, and died of the small-pox,) who has ever since been steadily following his learning under my direction, and has already taken one degree in the College, and is within about a year and a half of age for orders. They were desirous I would send him to them upon probation, to read prayers and sermons and catechise their youth, and he is accordingly gone among them, and, I believe, will be very acceptable to them; they promised to subscribe toward his support, and purpose, if he and they shall be on both sides suited, to recommend him to the honourable Society, and beg he may be their missionary.

In the mean time, they would be very humbly thankful to the honourable Society, if he may be allowed £10 or £15 toward his better support, or, at least, some assistance to defray his expenses when he shall go home for orders, for he has laid out almost all his estate upon his education.

I am, Reverend Sir, &c.,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Bishop of London.]

Stratford, in New-England, June 14th, 1731.

May it please your Lordship,

My Lord, there are two things which have occasioned some dispute among the clergy and people in these parts, about which I humbly presume to beg your Lordship's directions. One is relating to the exhortation after baptism to the god-fathers to bring the child to the Bishop to be confirmed. Some wholly omit this exhortation, because it is impracticable; others insert the words, (if there be opportunity,) because our adversaries object to it as a mere jest, to order the god-fathers to bring the child to the Bishop, when there is none within a thousand leagues of us, which is a reproach that we cannot answer.

The other dispute is about employing young scholars, that are candidates for the ministry, in villages and destitute places, in reading sermons and prayers, (omitting everything that is proper to the priest's office.) This, I own, is what I and some others have earnestly recommended as excusable, by reason of the necessities of the country, and have, in several instances, found it highly useful in keeping up a sense of religion, and propagating it, when resident ministers cannot be had; and though I have always let the honourable Society know of my proceedings herein, they have never intimated the least disapprobation of this method, but, on the other hand, have practically approved of it, in receiving once and again those who have been so employed. Notwithstanding this, there are some of our brethren who, with great zeal and importunity, cry out against this practice as a betraying of the Church, and giving up the necessity of ordination, &c., to the great mortification of those poor destitute people who have no other way of keeping up the worship of God among them.

My Lord, I humbly submit to your Lordship's correction, if in this or any other instance my conduct has been faulty, and earnestly beg your direction and benediction, who am, with the greatest veneration,

May it please your Lordship, your Lordship's

Humble servant,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[*Petition of several members of the Church of England, in Reading and Newtown, in Connecticut.*]

New-England, March 20th, 1732.

May it please the honourable Society,

We, the subscribers, members of the Church of England, in Reading and Newtown, within the County of Fairfield and Colony of Connecticut, in New-England, being under very great difficulty to come at the worship of God according to that excellent establishment, by reason of our distance from the honourable Society's missionaries, the Rev. Mr. Johnson and Mr. Caner, which is about twenty miles, and being indeed, some of us, at a great distance from any publick worship at all, whereby not only we ourselves, but our poor children, also extremely suffer, and are like to be trained up in very great ignorance of the knowledge of the Gospel, do beg leave to lay this our calamitous state before your venerable board, and become very humble petitioners for a share in that charity which is conspicuous even in this dark corner of the earth.

To this we are the rather encouraged by a favourable letter to some of our number from the honourable Society, obtained about two years after the Rev. Mr. Johnson's first coming among us, wherein the honourable Society were pleased to offer us a missionary upon certain conditions, which, at that time, we were not able to come upon, by reason of the settlement of the bearer hereof, Mr. John Beach, a gentleman, at that time, of a different persuasion; but now, more and fur-

ther encouraged by the said gentleman's being reconciled to the established Church of England, especially in that being now bound home to receive holy orders from the Lord Bishop of London, he is willing to return to this place of his former settlement and abode, if his Lordship and the honourable Society shall think proper.

The good opinion that persons of all persuasions have of him here, where he has been known for several years past, and accounted a gentleman of a remarkable sober and regular conduct, and of learning and good ability to discharge the ministerial office, gives us reason to promise ourselves a great deal of happiness and comfort from his future ministration, if the honourable Society shall think fit to return him to us.

Though we are poor, the unavoidable consequence of settling an uncultivated country, and so cannot possibly, without assistance, provide a suitable support for the abovesaid gentleman, yet what we are able we are very ready to engage, and have affixed to our respective names underwritten; and we do humbly hope and pray that the honourable Society, out of their great charity, will supply wherein we are wanting towards the said gentleman's support; as we flatter ourselves with hopes of success in this affair from the former goodness and great charity of your venerable board, so we would humbly hope that the consideration of several towns lying about us, at a distance of about seven miles, as Danbury, Ridgefield, Woodbury and New-Milford, and numbers of Indians, would be of some further inducement toward some suitable relief to our truly deplorable state; for, indeed, we are not so selfish as to expect Mr. Beach's service should be wholly confined to ourselves, but that he may be capable of propagating Christian knowledge in those other towns likewise.

Thus, the Reverend Mr. Johnson and Mr. Caner, though settled at Stratford and Fairfield, have been and are still very ready to assist us, so far as is consistent with the distance between them and ourselves, for whose service, as flowing from the Society's charity, we are truly thankful, wishing withal there may never be wanting pious men in these parts to promote the Church's interest.

Fearing we have been already too tedious, we only add our hearty and fervent prayers to Almighty God for success in your truly charitable designs to the souls of men.

We are, &c., &c.,

LEMUEL MOREHOUSE and others.

[*Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Bishop of London.*]

Stratford, in New-England,

April 5th, 1732.

My Lord,

I humbly thank your Lordship for your kind letter of September 30th, and am, as to myself, perfectly well satisfied with the answers you give to the difficulties I presumed to lay before you. Only, I imagined there might be some difference between the case of those who are immediately under an establishment, as it is in England, and those who are situated, as we are here, where the attorney and solicitor-general have declared there is no establishment of religion at all, and, therefore, not even of the Church of England, and, consequently, the obligations to an exact conformity seem not altogether the same as there. I write not this, my Lord, on my own account, as though I desired the least abatement of any thing established in England; I heartily wish to God every thing established there was admitted and established here, nor did I ever vary from the establishment in the least instance, unless where there was an evident necessity for it; but my solicitous concern for the weal of my dear country makes me willing, if it could consist with my duty to the best of Churches, and be indulged by the authority to whom I owe subjection, to abate, in some circumstantial matters, of what is wisely established at home, that I might have less occasion to spend my time and pains and pleading, and with so little success, because of things confessedly in their own nature indifferent and circumstantial, which I would much rather, and could, with greater success, devote to the advancing of the great essentials and vitals of religion, for which it

seems as if there would be the more occasion, inasmuch as (besides many other gross errors) the pernicious books and notions, which your Lordship found it so necessary to guard your Diocese against, are coming in upon the plantations like a flood, and will I [fear] take the more effect, by how much the less there is of the face of an establishment among us, or of Bishops to preside over us. And, indeed, I doubt, unless the Church be beforehand with them, these things, together with their wretched broken condition in the way they are at present in, will, 'ere long, induce those of the Congregational and Presbyterian persuasion to endeavour (and they may possibly succeed) to get themselves formed into an establishment, after the manner as it is in Scotland. These considerations, my Lord, induced me, upon a conversation with, and even at the desire of several ingenious men among the Dissenters in these parts, to draw up the enclosed proposals, which I humbly submit, with an entire resignation to your Lordship's wisdom, and which I hope, of your wonted goodness, you will pardon, and impute the vanity of my presumption to an earnest desire, if I could, to be doing something wherein I might be some way serviceable to my poor, confused and divided country. My Lord, as the Church here has been very unfortunate in the defeat of the noble design of the Reverend the Dean of Londonderry, which, especially, if it had been executed on the Continent, would have been of vast advantage to the interest of religion and learning in America, so it has, on the other hand, been happy since in the conversion, (besides a number of other good people,) of the worthy persons who have all had a publick education in the neighbouring College, and two of them have been dissenting teachers; two of them will go into other business, and one of them is Mr. Beach, the bearer hereof, whom I know, by long experience of him, (he having been heretofore my pupil, and ever since my neighbour,) to be a very ingenuous and studious person, and a truly serious and conscientious Christian; but I forbear to say any thing further of his case, and refer your Lordship to our joint recommendation of him,

And remain, &c., &c.,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

Proposals relating to some method for the more successful reformation and propagation of religion in America, humbly submitted to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of London.

(1.) INASMUCH as the Attorney and Solicitor-General have declared that there is no establishment of religion in these countries, it is humbly suggested whether some practicable method might not be devised and carried into execution for the establishment of religion in these English Dominions.

(2.) For seeing there are many parts of the English plantations that are in a manner destitute of any publick instruction at all, and where they are (generally, but very poorly) provided with teachers in the Independent or Congregational way, they are, according to the natural tendency of those opinions, miserably broken to pieces with divisions and contentions among themselves, insomuch, that they seem hastening on apace toward an utter dissolution, and some very corrupt doctrines are propagated without control, so that most people of sense and consideration among them are even sick and weary of their present situation, and long to come into some more effectual method for promoting the ends of government, religion, peace and order; it is therefore thought very likely that some establishment, even under an Episcopal form of government, would, in a little time, be generally submitted to. And yet, (3.) it will perhaps be impossible to procure a general reconciliation, especially among the populace, to all the ceremonies and constitutions of our Church, and much time and pains spent in pleading about them might be employed, and with better success, in promoting the great essentials and vitals of religion; it is, therefore, humbly submitted, whether it would be necessary or expedient to insist or be much intent upon the external and confessedly circumstantial matters, if any establishment were to be promoted; for, (4.) as the truly excellent rules which our most venerable reformers proposed to themselves, carried them into such a method of publick worship and discipline as is happily established in England, as being in the best

manner suited to the times and circumstances, that there had been, were and are, so it is with the humblest deference suggested, whether considering the vastly different circumstances of these places and times, the same rules would not lead to methods in several things differing as to circumstantial matters, if the reformation and propagation of religion were to be carried into an establishment in these countries? And, therefore, (5.) might there not be projected some such a comprehension suited to these countries, as was endeavoured by many in England in King William's time; according to which, many things as they now stand might be enjoined, viz., such as are of the greatest importance in themselves, and will be the most easily admitted, and some things a little altered to suit the present circumstances, and other things, which are of less importance and most objected against, only recommended? And (6.) lastly, is it impossible for the English Dominions in America to be provided for with one or two Bishops, and those subject to the Lord Bishop of London as Archbishop of the Plantations abroad; and is there no way to provide revenues, (though they were but small,) compared with those in England? Would not £400 or £500 sterling per annum a-piece, or, rather than fail, £300, enable them, in some good measure, to answer the ends of their sacred functions; and is it impossible that such a provision might be made without breaking in upon the interest of the governors and governments as they now stand? Though, indeed, it would be much happier for the Church, especially unless we had a Bishop, if the charters were taken away; and most people begin to think, since they have got into such a wretched, mobbish way of management, that it would be best for the people themselves.

If some such things as these could be accomplished, as the present situation of things here renders it now a very suitable juncture for something to be done, so it would be a truly great charity to the souls of men, and it is hard indeed if we must forever despair of such happiness.

[Rev. Mr. Caner to the Secretary.—Extract.]

Fairfield, New-England, Sept. 18th, 1733.

Sir,

I hope it will be some satisfaction to the honourable Society to be informed that the spirit and temper of the people, formerly so hot against us, very much abates, and that they begin to treat us in a much more friendly manner than they were wont; this good disposition, I hope, by God's assistance, to cultivate and improve to beneficial effects. I have the half year past baptised ten infants and one adult, and received seven new communicants, the whole number of which is now seventy-eight. The state of my Church in general is indeed much more promising than in time past; some difficulties, it is true, we still labour under, but which time and industry will in great measure remove.

I beg leave to subscribe myself, &c.,

H. CANER.

[Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Bishop of London.]

Stratford, in New-England,

December 10th, 1733.

My Lord,

Your Lordship remembers that, in the year 1725, upon a representation made by the ministers of the Church in Boston, of a design then on foot in that government of a council of their ministers, to meet by appointment of the General Assembly there, the Lords Justices were pleased, in a letter to the Lieutenant-Governor of that colony, to express their disapprobation of any such proceedings, as implying an invasion of his Majesty's prerogative, and ordered him to forbid

any such council of ministers to meet, and declare that it is not lawful for the clergy to meet as in a Synod, without authority from his Majesty. Now, my Lord, how far the case of this government differs from that, your Lordship will judge; but I presumed you would not take it ill of me if I should lay before your Lordship any case of that nature that should occur here, and humbly submit it to your Lordship, whether it should deserve your notice; and I am desired by several even of the dissenting ministers here to submit the vote and order of the Assembly, enclosed to your Lordship's perusal.

I humbly thank your Lordship for your interest with the honourable Society for settling a school in this place, and likewise in behalf of Mr. Pierson and Mr. Brown, who are returned back to their native country, full of a grateful sense of your Lordship's and the Society's goodness to them; and, I doubt not but they will be very useful in promoting the ends of the Society in the places for which they are appointed.

I beg leave, also, to inform your Lordship, that the growing confusion among the Dissenters in these parts very much tends, among other means, to put thinking and serious persons upon coming over to the Church. Among others there are two or three very worthy young ministers in this colony who, I have reason to believe, from no other reason than the love of truth and order, and a sense of duty, will, in a little time, declare for us, and two of them especially have hopes that the most of their congregations will conform with them. One of them is one Mr. Arnold, who succeeded me at West-Haven, near the College, where I preach once a quarter.

If they can't be admitted to the Society's service in holy orders, which they would earnestly desire, they will do what good they can in a lay capacity; but as they would be glad to be employed by the Society, if it be practicable to have new missions, so I have written to the Secretary to know whether any encouragement could be had for them to go over with such a view. Indeed, there are daily growing and pressing occasions in many parts of these plantations for new missions and missionaries, and I wish to God the Society's

abilities to provide for them might increase in proportion as they do.

I am, may it please your Lordship, your Lordship's most obedient, most dutiful son and servant,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[*The Clergy of Connecticut to the Bishop of London.*]

Fairfield, in Connecticut,

March 14th, 1733-4.

May it please your Lordship,

It is with great pleasure that we see the success of our labours in the frequent conversions of dissenting teachers in this country, and the good disposition toward the excellent constitution of our Church, growing up among the people wherever the honourable Society have established their missions. Sundry other of their teachers are likely to appear for the Church, and two very honest and ingenuous men have declared themselves this winter, one of which is Mr. Ebenezer Punderson, the bearer hereof, who being bound to England with design to apply himself to your Lordship and the honourable Society for holy orders and a mission, we humbly beg leave to lay before your Lordship our recommendation of this worthy gentleman. He has been for above four years a settled minister in the dissenting way to a parish near New-London, called New-Groton; and as he has a good prospect that a considerable number of that parish will conform to the Church with him, he has a solicitous desire to return back in holy orders to that people with whom he has so long dwelt, and among whom he is greatly respected.

As to the circumstances of his people, our distance from them renders us incapable of saying any thing further of them; but as to the gentleman himself, we have well known him for at least seven years, are able, with truth, to assure your Lordship, that he has always been remarked for a person of good parts, earnestly inquisitive after truth, and inde-

fatigably studious in the pursuit of it; that he has read many of the best of our English divines; and has made as great a proficiency in learning as can be expected from his age and circumstances, and that he has ever been esteemed a sober, virtuous and devout person, and remarkable for his contempt of the world; and we are persuaded that it is from a serious and impartial examination of things, and the sincere love of truth and sense of duty, that he has declared himself for our excellent Church and come over to our communion; and he is sincerely well affected to the present government; we humbly, therefore, beseech your Lordship he may be admitted to holy orders, and added to the number of our brethren, and remain,

May it please your Lordship,

Your Lordship's servants,

SAMUEL JOHNSON,
J. WETMORE,
H. CANER,
ISAAC BROWNE.

[*Rev. Mr. Seabury to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

New-London, March 30th, 1734.

Reverend Sir,

These wait upon the honourable Society by the hands of Mr. Ebenezer Punderson, who comes to make his application to my Lord Bishop of London and the Society for Propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, for orders and a mission. He hath been educated in Yale College, Connecticut, where I had a particular acquaintance with him, and where he always had the character of a sober person. About five years ago he was called to preach in the Presbyterian or Independent way, at Groton, near New-London, where he soon received ordination; but falling under doubts and scruples concerning their power of ordination and method of Church government, and, at the same time, acquainting himself

with the Church of England, he found himself obliged, upon true and regular conviction, to embrace her communion, and thereupon he laid down his ministry in which he was settled to good advantage; but a considerable number of the people of that place being also convinced of the reasonableness and necessity of Church Communion, and having strong affection for the person of Mr. Punderson, on account of his abilities and pious, exemplary life, have been very solicitous with him to make his application to the honourable Society for Propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts for a mission to that place. In testimony of which, they have signed a desire or petition to the honourable Society, with the promise of contributing a certain sum considerably to his support and maintenance, and it is most probable that many more will conform to the Church of England upon better knowledge of it and acquaintance with it.

[*Rev. Mr. Beach to the Secretary.*]

Newtown, in Connecticut,

August 7th, 1735.

Reverend Sir,

I think it my duty to acquaint the venerable Society with the present state of my parish, although the alteration since my last has not been very considerable. I have baptised twenty-nine children and admitted twenty-five persons more to the communion, so that the number of our communion now at Newtown, Reading, and the places adjacent, is ninety-five. I preach frequently and administer the Sacrament at Ridgefield, being about eighteen miles distance from the place where I dwell, where there are about fourteen or eighteen families of very serious and religious people, who have a just esteem of the Church of England, and are very desirous to have the opportunity of worshipping God in that way. I have constantly preached, one Sunday at Newtown, and the other at Reading; and after I have preached at Read-

ing in the day-time, I perform divine service and preach at Newtown in the evening; and although I have not that success I could wish for, yet I do, and hope I always shall, faithfully endeavour (as far as my poor ability will allow) to promote that good work, that the venerable Society sent and maintained me for.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your most humble servant,

JOHN BEACH.

[*Rev. Mr. Seabury to the Secretary.*]

New-London, August 22d, 1735.

Reverend Sir,

By this opportunity, for which I have long waited, (otherwise my accounts of the year past would have come much earlier,) I have the satisfaction of informing the honourable Society that my congregation increaseth; that there are one hundred people commonly attending divine service in the summer season, which is double the number that attended constantly at my first coming; that I have had seven new communicants, and baptised thirteen infants the year past; and beside my attendance of the Church at New-London, I have always, from the beginning of my mission, preached at Norwich, a town about fourteen miles from New-London, three times a year, until it was put under the care of the Rev. Mr. Punderson; and sundry times have preached lectures at North Groton; and during the absence of the Rev. Mr. Punderson, in his voyage to England for orders and a mission, I preached there once a month on Sundays, by consent of the Church at New-London, and in this instant, August, I preached at Windham, a place about twenty-six miles from New-London, to a congregation of eighty people, of whom some stayed sundry hours with me after sermon was over, and were desirous to be informed concerning the Church of England; and upon my conversing with them they con-

fessed that the Church had been sadly misrepresented, and that they should have a more favourable opinion of it for the future, and desired that I would come again; and in justice to the members of the Church of England, in New-London, I am obliged to observe that they treat me with great respect and affection, and are very just in paying me the value of their promised subscriptions, which I receive by way of contribution every Sunday after evening service, and I must own further, that the dissenting party also are very civil and obliging to me.

But though the Church at New-London hath increased, yet it hath met with great losses and disadvantages, of which the honourable Society will be sensible when I assure them that there is not one man of any considerable estate or circumstances remaining in the Church at New-London, who first requested the Society for a minister. The worthy Mr. Stackmple, who laboured with abundance of zeal, and freely contributed his estate to the erecting of the Church, is since dead; he was a gentleman of great charity and virtue, and was the collector of his Majesty's customs in this colony. The honourable Major Merritt, who hath subscribed £50 toward the building of the Church, is since dead. The honourable Major Pryor, who gave £100 to the building of the Church, is since removed, and of the common people, who were the first petitioners to the Society, Mr. Jarrard Peel, Mr. Daniel Apley, Mr. Samuel Fairbank, are dead; and Mr. Thomas Mumford, Mr. James Packer, Mr. Giles Goddard, Mr. Thomas Eldridge, Mr. Joseph Latham, who are all men of good estates, dwelling in South Groton, are put into the Rev. Mr. Punderson's parish in North Groton, though they ever looked on themselves to belong to the Church at New-London, as is evident from there being three of them always chosen of the vestry of New-London; and they have always been at equal charges with those living at New-London Church, and not at North Groton, and are much nearer to Church at New-London, South Groton being parted from New-London only by a river half a mile wide; and the honourable Society, I humbly conceive, were moved to place South Groton in Mr. Punderson's mission at his request and

representation of the case only, for the people never requested it nor expected it, and still attend oftenest at the Church at New-London.

But notwithstanding these losses and disadvantages, the Church at New-London grows, and I trust will grow and increase, by the blessing of Divine Providence and the countenance and charity of your honourable Corporation. And I can assure the honourable Society, that my utmost diligence is employed in their service, and that I shall always embrace every opportunity of enlarging the influence of their extensive Church.

I am, Reverend Sir,
Yours and the honourable Society's
Most obedient and most humble servant,
SAM'L SEABURY.

[*Rev. Mr. Seabury to the Secretary.*]

New-London, in New-England,
August 11th, 1736.

Reverend Sir,

You will receive the trouble of this to acquaint the honourable Society of my success in promoting their designs, which hath been something remarkable at Hebron, an inland town in this colony, about thirty miles distance from New-London. Some of the inhabitants of that place, about the 20th of January last, desired me to preach among them, which I did to a numerous congregation, who attended the service of the common prayers with great seriousness; and when the service was concluded, there stayed of the company about thirty or forty persons, inquiring concerning the Church of England, and proposing the vulgar objections against it, beside many others which were raised entirely from falsehoods, and had no shadow of truth to support them; to all which I answered them with truth, and the best reasons and arguments that my understanding and know-

ledge could suggest, and in this manner I conversed with them at least four hours, who, in fine, appeared very much surprised to find that they had always been very prejudiced with so many false notions about the Church; wondering how men could leave its pious and holy communion, and, most of all, that any could have the conscience to load the established Church with so many odious and injurious slanders.

They earnestly desired me to come again, and at their importunity I have visited them six times, twice of which hath been on Sundays. More than twenty families there and in some neighbouring places do embrace the Church; and when I was last there, which was on the first day of this instant, August, I administered the Sacrament to fourteen communicants.

They are very desirous of a missionary, but defer offering any petition to the Society for Propagating the Gospel, having been informed that the Society are not in a condition at present to establish any new missions; but they have importuned me to visit them, and administer the Sacrament among them, four times a year, to which I have given them encouragement, till I could inform the honourable Society and receive their commands.

As to the Church in New-London, it continueth in nearly the same state as when I wrote last, which is about last September, since which I have baptised nine, of whom one was adult, and the communicants are seventeen.

The people here continue to treat me in a very handsome manner, and annually do something more than make good their obligations in contributing to my support.

Reverend Sir, your,

And the honourable Society's most dutiful

And most obedient servant,

SAM'L SEABURY.

[*Rev. Mr. Beach to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

*Newtown, in New-England,
September 8th, 1736.*

Reverend Sir,

Since my last I have baptised twenty-five children and five adults, and have admitted to the communion two persons more; the whole number of my communicants is now one hundred and five; but by reason of our people living very distant from each other, I seldom have more than fifty communicants together at once, and for that reason I administer that Sacrament every other Sunday. I have lately, upon the repeated invitations of the people of Newark, in New-Jersey, visited them. I performed divine service two Sundays, and had about three or four hundred hearers; they appeared very desirous of having a minister of the Church of England settled among them, and are now about sending a memorial to the venerable Society for that end, and have earnestly desired me to certify that honourable Board of my willingness to be removed, if they see fit to erect a mission, and remove me thither.

Thereupon, I thought it my duty to acquaint that honourable body that I am perfectly contented with my present condition, and should have no inclination to remove if I did not think that I could do much more good there than I can in this parish; and that within a little time there will be, it is probable, at Newark, the largest congregation within two hundred miles; and it is very likely they will soon be able to maintain a minister without any assistance, though at present they cannot well do it; but in this I entirely submit to the wisdom of the venerable Society,

And am, Reverend Sir,

Your most humble servant,

JOHN BEACH.

[Rev. Mr. Caner to the Secretary.]

Fairfield, in New-England,

13th September, 1736.

Reverend Sir,

In a letter by the Rev. Mr. McSparran, I acquainted the honourable Society of my safe arrival in New-England; since then I have so good a state of health as to be capable of serving my parish in a constant way. The professors of the Church of England here increase in numbers and seriousness.

The Dissenters among us are busily employed in examining into the conduct of the missionaries in order to have whereof to accuse us; some instances, misinterpreted, I understand they pitch upon. I trust they will not find any instance in my conduct to make the foundation of a complaint. I am not conscious that I have laid myself open to misinterpretation, and as to real misconduct, I defy them; however, as they seem resolved to make thorough work, if any complaint of this nature should come before the honourable Society, I beg I may have notice of it, and an opportunity to vindicate myself from any such aspersions. I hope, when we are sufficiently sifted and tried, we shall come out purer and less exceptionable.

The particular state of my parish at this time the honourable Society will find expressed in my *notitia parochialis*, underwritten, to which I beg leave to refer.

I am the honourable Society's

Most dutiful and obedient, and, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

HENRY CANER.

[*Rev. Mr. Arnold to the Secretary.*]

*West Haven, in Connecticut,
September 22d, 1736.*

Reverend Sir,

I performed divine service last Sunday at Milford, one of the most considerable towns in Connecticut Colony, where the use of the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, or the reading the Scripture in divine service, was never before known. There was a very numerous auditory, most attentive and desirous to be instructed in the worship of the Church of England; but these who are looking towards the Church are commonly the poorer sort of people; for the staff of government being in the hands of the Dissenters, who rule the Church with an iron rod, those who receive honour one of another set themselves at a distance, and allow their rage and revenge to increase in proportion to the increase of the Church. That God, in mercy to our land, may continue and prosper that honourable Society, is, and shall be the fervent prayer of their, and your most obliged, devoted, humble servant,

JONATHAN ARNOLD.

[*From the Clergy of New-England to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

*Fairfield, in New-England,
March 29th, 1739.*

Reverend Sir,

Notwithstanding it has once and again been declared by the Attorney and Solicitor-General, (and approved of by the Lords Justices in their letter to the Lieutenant-Governor of Boston, dated October 7th, 1725,) that there is no establishment of any religion in these colonies, nor can be without

his most sacred Majesty's explicit consent; yet this government have taken upon them to make an establishment of the Congregational way, (as they call it,) appears by several acts in their printed law book, and do act as an establishment, and to treat the Church of England as Dissenters. They have, indeed, made a law by which they pretended to exempt the people of the Church of England from paying to the support of their ministers and the building of their meeting-houses, but they have contrived several methods to elude it.

2. Among which, a principal contrivance is to make certain funds in each town to be let out to use for raising the salaries of their ministers, without any tax upon the people. This first began at Fairfield, by the sale of certain lands, sequestered by the proprietors of that town for the support of the ministry, the money arising from which sale they divided to each parish according to their propriety, only excluding the members of the Church of England in each parish from any share or benefit in this sale, though there were many of them as considerable proprietors as any of those who were admitted to enjoy it. And the success with which this unjust action was attended has put them upon much the same measures throughout the colony; and one means of making such funds is by the sale of seven new townships of common lands belonging to this government, wherein (as we apprehend) the people of the Church of England have equally a right, according to their proportion, with the rest of the people of the government; and the money arising from the sale of these lands they have appropriated either to the schools, or to what they call the established ministry of this government, at the election of the several towns, (as will appear by their printed acts to this purpose,) so that, according to their sense of their law, we of the Church of England are excluded from any benefit of that sale.

Another of these devices for raising of the above mentioned funds has been by a bill, (not yet indeed passed into an act, though we have reason to believe the design is not yet laid aside,) to appropriate the loan of their last commission of £50,000 of bills of credit to that purpose.

To prevent these proceedings, the people of our Church

have laid an humble address before the General Assembly, signed by more than six hundred and thirty males above sixteen years old, (and the number could have amounted to above seven hundred if all would have had opportunity to sign,) praying that they might have their proportion of these public moneys toward the support of their ministers; but they have been pleased in their last Assembly to negative that petition, so that our people can expect no favour or justice from our government in this regard, and beg of us to lay their oppressed state before the Society.

3. Another grievance that we have to complain of is, the case of sundry people (to the number of fifty families) in the westernmost parts of this colony, chiefly belonging to Horse-neck and Stamford, living so near to the Parish Church of Rye, as that they can and do attend upon the ministrations of the Reverend Mr. Wetmore, who also does frequently officiate among them, to which he was requested by their joint application to him. When, according to the tenor of the above-mentioned act, he demanded his due proportion of the tax, viz., what was paid by the professors of the Church of England, payment was refused; upon which he commenced an action against the collector, which went through the courts and was finally lost. The people, perceiving themselves destitute of any hopes of relief in a course of law, applied themselves in an humble address to the General Assembly, praying for a redress of this grievance, which address was set aside, and nothing was done for their relief; so that they, and all others living but a few miles from any Church of England, whatever care and pains the minister may take in visiting and administering to them, shall, notwithstanding the said act, be obliged to pay to the support of dissenting ministers, unless relief can be obtained from home.

4. That we may be as little tedious as possible, we will pass by several other instances whereby they have endeavoured to elude the act they had made in our favour, and proceed lastly to lay before the Society the case of the Rev. Mr. Arnold, which is as follows: William Greyson, of London, Esq., made a donation of a piece of land in New-Haven to him, as trustee for the Church of England, to build a

Church on, and when he went to take possession and make improvement of said land by ploughing the same, he was opposed by a great number of people, being resolute that no Church should be built there, who, in a riotous and tumultuous manner, being (as we have good reason to believe) put upon it by some in authority, and of the chief men in the town, beat his cattle and abused his servants, threatening both his and their lives to that degree, that he was obliged to quit the field. And though he made presentment against sundry of them, for breach of the peace, to the civil authority, yet they refuse to take cognizance of it, and so he could obtain no relief.

We beg leave to subscribe ourselves, Reverend Sir, the venerable Society's and your most humble and most obedient servants,

SAMUEL SEABURY,

EBEN'R PUNDERSON,

JONA. ARNOLD,

JOHN BEACH.

SAM'L JOHNSON,

J. WETMORE,

HENRY CANER,

[*Rev. Mr. Punderson to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

Groton, June 18th, 1739.

Reverend Sir,

There is not any more considerable alteration in the parishes under my care than that of the spirit and temper of our dissenting brethren, many of which, from being revilers and haters of our Church, are brought to have a good opinion of it, and occasionally attend our worship. I believe that at the last Christmas, and upon a Lord's day since, there met in our Church upwards of four hundred persons who behaved soberly and devoutly, many of which had been our bitterest enemies, which to me is an unspeakable comfort. Upon the earnest desire of a considerable number, I have made a journey to Middletown, about forty miles from my home, and

preached to a sober body of people, near one hundred, two of which have since come and joined themselves to our communion.

Reverend Sir, I am,

Yours, and the Society's most obedient servant,

EBEN'R PUNDERSON.

[*Rev. Mr. Beach to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

Newtown, August 24th, 1739.

Reverend Sir,

I have been here almost seven years, and have baptised one hundred and sixty-four, of which thirteen are adults, and have one hundred and twenty-three communicants, but they live so far distant from each other, that commonly I can administer to no more than about fifty at once, which occasions my administering it the more frequently ; and, though I meet with many discouragements, yet I have this satisfaction, that all my communicants (one or two excepted) do adorn their profession by a sober, righteous and godly life.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your very humble servant,

JOHN BEACH.

[*From the Clergy of New-England to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

New-London, May 4th, 1740.

Reverend Sir,

We, the Clergy of New-England, convened at New-London, beg leave to represent to the honourable Society the state of a considerable congregation of the Church of England settled at Hopkinton and the parts adjacent. This town

has been for some years a place of resort to several creditable families of Conformists, whose inclination or employment has caused them to remove from Boston into the country, to whom many of the old inhabitants, both of the Church and dissenting persuasions, have united themselves in promoting the Episcopal Church, being induced thereto by a monthly lecture preached among them, and some encouragement they received of being recommended to the Society's favour; there is likewise a probability of a large increase by the addition of many others who have purchased farms in the same town, so as to possess near a third part of the township, in order to settle themselves or children thereon, provided they can enjoy a constant public worship of the Church of England, and procure some assistance toward the support of an Episcopal minister to reside with them, which they express an earnest desire of, and a readiness to contribute to the utmost of their ability towards his comfortable subsistence.

We are the honourable Society's,

And, Reverend Sir,

Your most humble servants,

ARTH. BROWNE,

JOHN USHER,

SAM'L SEABURY,

HENRY CANER,

JOHN BEACH,

ROGER PRICE,

EBEN'R PUNDERSON,

JAMES HONEYMAN,

SAM'L JOHNSON

JAMES MACSPARRAN

[*Rev. Mr. Morris to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

West Haven, September 13th, 1740.

Reverend Sir,

I was received by the Church people with no small pleasure, for, upon Mr. Arnold leaving them, they seemed to despair of having another to succeed him; beside, the Dissenters used to boast and affirm confidently that the Society

would never send here another missionary, which was some mortification to them, who are a people indeed not to be despised, and are ready enough to express their gratitude. I must further say of them, that they are the most versed in casuistry of any people I ever met; I mean of those that can only read English. The Archbishop of Canterbury's Treatise on Church Government, and the late Archbishop of Dublin's Collection of Cases, with several other books, have been read here to good purpose, and what they are further to be valued for is, that their conforming to the Church has exposed them to many inconveniences and oppression from the Dissenters: I have two warrants by me, granted before my time, to take up two men in Waterbury for not frequenting their meetings; and when one of them offered to give his reasons why he could not go to their extempore prayers, he was silenced and ordered to prison, or pay his fine; two more in North Haven were some time in jail before my arrival, for not paying their rates to the dissenting teachers, which is contrary to a law made here in our favour, (as I am informed,) at a time when they were apprehensive of losing their charter. The governor of this colony is elected yearly, and one Williams, who was lately rector of the Seminary in New-Haven, quitted that office with a view to be elected governor next year; but if he succeeds, we are likely to have a troublesome neighbour.

Though there be some hot spirits among the Dissenters, especially their teachers and those in power, yet there are many others more moderate, and who seem well affected to our Church, and are apt to frequent it.

Should I give you an account of the geography of my mission, you would find it large enough for a Diocese; but I would not be understood to mean this by way of complaint of the difficulty and length of the roads; and if I may be allowed to complain of any thing, it must be of the wretched fanaticism that runs so high in this country, and a body would be apt to think higher than it did in England in Cromwell's time, which does not so well suit one of my complexion; yet I have been serviceable in the Church, and will endeavour to be more so.

I have been informed since I came here, that the Dissenters

in North Haven have obliged the Church people to contribute towards building a meeting-house, and sent one poor fellow to jail who was not in a capacity to pay his cess; however, this may be contrary to law here, yet it is found, by repeated experience, that a poor Churchman can expect no redress in any court here.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your most obliged and very obedient servant,

THEO. MORRIS.

October 28th, 1740.

[*Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

Stratford, in N. E., Nov. 10th, 1740.

Reverend Sir,

As to the complaint we designed to lay before the Society about the money arising from the sale of the seven new townships, the event is that, rather than the Church should have any share in it, the last Assembly have repealed the act that vested in the several dissenting ministers their dividends of it, exclusive of the Church, so that now, by a former act, it belongs to the schools, though I imagine they yet have some contrivance to exclude us from any advantage from it; for the increase of the Church in this country is very displeasing to those at the helm, and disposes them to distress us in all the ways they can, and particularly by so explaining the law, in their execution of it, as to oblige many of our people to pay their public dues to the support of their ministers and building their meeting-houses, if they happen to live at such a distance from our Churches as renders a constant attendance impracticable, by which means some of them have been hauled to jail, and there been forced to abide 'till they paid the utmost farthing. This has been the case with some people at a village called Cheshire, who have lately complained to me; and this is threatened and doubtless will

be shortly executed upon the people of another village called Scotland, belonging to Simsbury, a town sixty miles northward.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

SAM'L JOHNSON.

[*Rev. Mr. Punderson to the Bishop of London.*]

N. Groton, 12th Dec., 1741.

My Lord,

The duties and labours of my mission are exceedingly increased by the surprising enthusiasms that rage among us, the centre of which is the place of my residence, a short account of which I shall trouble your Lordship with. Since Mr. Whitefield has been in this country, there has been a great number of vagrant preachers, the most remarkable of which is Mr. Davenport, of Long Island, who came to New-London in July, pronounced your ministers unconverted, and, by his boisterous behaviour and vehement crying, "Come to Christ," many were *struck*, as the phrase is, and made the most terrible and affecting noise, that was heard a mile from the place. He came to this Society, acted in the same manner five days, was followed by innumerable [people;] some could not endure the house, saying that it seemed to them more like the infernal regions, than the place of worshipping the God of Heaven; many, after the amazing horror and distress that seized them, received comfort, (as they term it,) and five or six of these young men in this Society are continually going about, especially in the night, converting, as they call it, their fellow men; two of these act as their ministers, and they affirm, converted above two hundred in an Irish town about twenty miles back in the country. Their meetings are almost every night in this and the neighbouring parishes, and the most astonishing effects attend them: screechings, faintings, convulsions, visions, ap-

parent death for twenty or thirty hours, actual possession with evil spirits, as they own themselves. The spirit in all is remarkably bitter against the Church of England. Two who were "struck," and proceeded in this way of exhorting and praying, until actually possessed, came to me, asked the same questions: "Are you born again?"—"Have you the witness of the Spirit?" &c., as they all do; used the same texts of Scripture; taught the same doctrines; called me Beelzebub, the prince of devils; and, in their possession, burnt about £1,200. They have since been to me, asked my forgiveness, and bless God that He has restored them to the spirit of a sound mind. There are at least twenty or thirty of these lay holders-forth, within ten miles of my house, who hold their meetings every night in the week in some place or other, excepting Saturday night, and incredible pains are taken to seduce and draw away the members of my Church; but, blessed be God, we still rather increase.

I am, my Lord,

Your obedient servant,

EBEN'R PUNDERSON.

[*Rev. Mr. Morris to the Secretary.*]

Derby, June 20th, 1741.

Reverend Sir,

Since I wrote before, I made it my business to be further acquainted with the people, especially the Dissenters, many of whom I found, on my travel, well affected to our worship, and ready to conform, had they an opportunity of a Church at a reasonable distance. Others, I have heard since, object to their not being attended as often as they could wish. This proves too strong an objection among weaker people, where dissenting teachers are so numerous. There are others who, in their private conversations, profess a great liking for the Church, will readily own what they cannot be reconciled to

in the Dissenters' scheme, especially the sort of ordination first set up in this country; and though they may be brought to approve our liturgy, notwithstanding all the industry of their teachers, yet, as they are men who have little places and employments, or obtain hopes of having them, they will not easily be persuaded to conform. This last difficulty is the greatest I have met with; indeed, the governing party, who are the most violent, seem to be a little more moderate than they have been, but their moderation is owing to their being afraid of England. I have lately been at Simsbury, where I found about thirty females of our communion; they are in hopes of having a minister at last, and have accordingly prepared some timber to build a Church. I remitted their rates, which amount to about fifty pounds of this currency, to help them forward with the building. I do not mention this as an act of generosity, for, however I may have a right to protect them from the Dissenters, I think I ought not to apply their money to my own use, since they are too remote to be visited above twice a year at most, considering how many parishes I have beside to attend, and, indeed, remote enough from one another. I urged upon my brethren at the Convention to assist me in attending Simsbury, which some consented to do, so that they can be served now eight times a year, and this, I hope, will keep them in heart.

I have taken another Church into my care at Wallingford, which consists of twelve families. I engaged to attend them once a quarter, which they seem to be satisfied with, for they know it is as much as I can do for them. I procured Mr. Thomson, whom I mentioned before, to officiate every Sunday in some one parish in my absence, and as his prudence and discretion have rendered him entirely agreeable to the people, he proves very serviceable to me.

I must further acquaint you that, in many places, there are some undivided lands laid out for the use of the ministry; and those of the Church party who are proprietors think it reasonable their proportion should be appropriated to the use of their minister, and are ready enough to engage in a lawsuit if there was hopes of success in England; indeed, if Dr. McSparran gain his cause, it will pave the way to do the

Church a very considerable service.* Since I came to this mission there have been added to our communion eight persons, four of whom conformed lately ; six more have conformed, but have not been yet at the Sacrament. This, Sir, is all I have to add to my first letter, dated last September, and which I hope has not miscarried.

I am, Reverend Sir, your most obliged
And very obedient servant,
THEO. MORRIS.

[*Rev. Mr. Punderson to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

N. Groton, 20th December, 1741.

Reverend Sir,

I would inform the venerable Society, &c., that enthusiasm exceedingly rages in the parts under my care, but especially in this ; the most amazing screechings, screamings, faintings, convulsions and visions attend it, and are made the inseparable marks of conversion and the new birth ; and two persons in this parish have been so wonderfully wrought upon in this manner as to become actually possessed by a devil, as all grant ; and one of them who, by the good providence of God, is restored to the use of reason, confesses the Spirit, in these demoniacs and enthusiasts, is extremely violent against the established Church ; and both I and all under my care are declared both by teacher and people to be unconverted, and going straight down to hell. 'Tis amazing how this wild scene prevails, and how it will end God only knows. It increases my labours to that degree, that I can scarce spend a whole day in my study or family. I have twice been desired to preach to a large congregation of Seventh-day Baptists, in Westerly, and complied with their desires.

I am yours, and the honourable Society's
Real friend and servant,
EBEN'R PUNDERSON.

* Dr. McSparran was then engaged in prosecuting a suit he had brought for the recovery of certain lands in Narragansett, which he claimed in behalf of the Church. The Rhode Island Documents will furnish the history of this proceeding.

[*Rev. Mr. Punderson to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

N. Groton, March 30th, 1742.

Reverend Sir,

There never was more pressing need of good books among us than in this astonishing season, in which the wildest enthusiasm and superstition prevail; and it is attended with the most bitter fruits of uncharitableness and spiritual pride, an instance or two of which I shall trouble the honourable Society with. Some time since, immediately after I had preached a sermon in Norwich, one of these enthusiasts came to me and demanded my experience; (which is very common;) his request being denied, he pronounced me unconverted, and, not only going myself, but leading all under my charge, down to hell. Soon after, he was attended with a dumb spirit, and uttered nothing for five or six days, except two or three blasphemous expressions, viz., Go tell the brethren I am risen; at another time, Suffer little children to come unto me, &c. There also came another of these exhorters (as they are called here) to my house, attended by many; declared me as upright and as exemplary a person as any he knew in the world, yet he knew I was unconverted, and leading my people down to hell; he affirmed that he was sent with a message from God, and felt the Spirit upon him, &c.; he seemed sincere. Soon after, Mr. Croswell, the dissenting teacher in this parish, with two attendants, came singing to my house, pronounced me unconverted, yet, at the time, declared that he did not know me guilty of any crime. I assured him that, in my opinion, it was a greater crime for him thus to murder my soul, usefulness and reputation in the world, than for me to attempt his natural life; and that he certainly must be a worse man, thus, in cool blood and under a religious pretence, to pronounce damnation against me, than for a common swearer to say to another "God damn you;" since this he is not so fierce as before.

At the first rise of this enchanting delusion, I was under melancholy apprehensions that the infant Church of England, in this and the adjacent places, would be crushed, those being the centre of the religious delirium ; some have gone after it, but more been added, and I am more and more convinced of the promise of our blessed Lord, that the gates of hell shall never prevail, &c. My labours abundantly increase, and I have scarce been at home a week together the past winter ; sometimes I preach two or three sermons a week, beside constantly on the Lord's-day, and I have good hope that my labour is not in vain.

Your and the honourable Society's

Real friend and servant,

EBEN'R PUNDERSON.

[*Rev. Mr. Seabury to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

New-London, in New-England,

May 3d, 1742.

Reverend Sir,

I observe in the collection of papers aforesaid, page 37, order the 23d, a direction to the several missionaries to send an account of the founding and building the Churches in their respective parishes, and how the same have been supplied with ministers, and also an account of the glebe, &c. In compliance therewith, I state that, from the records of St. James' Church, at New-London, it appears that the said Church was built by subscription ; the first bears date June 25th, 1725. That on the 27th of September following, seven of the members of the Church of England did, by an instrument under their hand, form themselves into a committee for the purchasing a convenient place in New-London, and for erecting and building a Church for the service of Almighty God, according to the liturgy of the Church of England as by law established ; that at the same meeting the Reverend Mr. McSparran, the Society's-missionary at Narra-

gansett, was made treasurer ; that on June the 20th, 1726, a carpenter was agreed with for a wood frame ; that on the 9th of August following the timber was brought to the ground ; on the first of October the frame was raised and completed, and on the 28th of November, 1727, the house was enclosed, glazed, the underfloor laid, a neat desk and pulpit finished, and in this state was the Church at New-London when I arrived there, December 9th, 1730, in the service of the honourable Society.

New-London is a small town, standing by a pleasant river about two miles from the sea, [sound,] the principal port of Connecticut colony, first settled by the Independents and a few Anabaptists and sort of Quaker Baptists.

The first members of the Church of England who founded St. James' Church were either Europeans, not long settled here, or persons brought up in other colonies. The government here makes no provision for the Church, though they commonly grant large tracts of land in every town for the advantage of the Independents ; but the Church at New-London has neither glebe nor parsonage-house, and except a weekly contribution of its members for the use of the minister, which amounts to about a crown sterling per week, it is wholly supported by the charity of the honourable Society.

The sectaries here seem crumbling into more parties and divisions daily, branding each other with anathemas. The Church under my care remains steadfast.

Yours, and the honourable Society's

Most humble and most obedient servant,

SAMUEL SEABURY.

[*Rev. Mr. Caner to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

Fairfield, New-England, July 1st, 1742.

Reverend Sir,

Enthusiam has made no progress at Fairfield, and the effects of it at Stamford, Norwalk, Ridgefield, &c., where it

has a large spread, has been the reconciling many sober, considerate people to the communion of our Church. In order to prevent as much as possible the spreading of enthusiastic principles, both now and hereafter, among us, I have applied myself closely to the duty of catechizing young and old who do not appear to have sufficiently digested the grounds of our most holy faith; the catechumens, being divided into three classes, are examined and instructed, according to their several improvements, every Lord's-day after sermon, in the afternoon.

The venerable Society's

Most dutiful and obedient, and, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

HENRY CANER.

[*The Clergy of Connecticut to the Bishop of London.*]

Fairfield, in Connecticut,

August 24th, 1742.

May it please your Lordship,

We, your Lordship's clergy of this Colony of Connecticut, humbly beg leave to lay before your Lordship the difficulties which at present affect us. The want of a Bishop to reside among us has been often mentioned as a very great obstruction to the propagation of religion in this remote part of the world; and we take leave upon this occasion to renew our most humble thanks, as for all your Lordship's good offices toward the Church in these plantations, so particularly for your kind attention to the several representations of this nature, which we have formerly made, and your sincere endeavours to obtain this advantage for us, and, since that could not be effected, for the kind provision your Lordship has made for us, as some remedy to this inconvenience, by appointing Commissaries among us under your Lordship's own special direction. But as the number of Clergy within this district

is considerably increased, since the appointment of a Commissary at Boston, we humbly hope your Lordship will excuse us if we presume to suggest, with great submission, whether it might not be highly expedient for your Lordship to appoint a Commissary in this colony; our distances from the Commissary at Boston is such as makes it impracticable for us to attend upon the yearly Convention, and, consequently, to receive the benefit of that appointment. There are now fourteen Churches built and building, and seven Clergymen within this colony, and others daily called for; the nearest of us about one hundred and twenty, and the most of us upward of two hundred miles from Boston; and the charge of such a journey, yearly, is too considerable for our circumstances well to admit of. Beside, the absence from our parishes, which such a distance requires, proves oftentimes great prejudice to our people, not only from the want of publick worship, but likewise in regard they are liable to be seduced by the indefatigable endeavours of enthusiastic teachers, who, since Mr. Whitefield's tour through this colony, have made an astonishing progress.

We would not be thought to prescribe, and therefore bespeak your Lordship's candour, when we presume to mention the Reverend Mr. Johnson, of Stratford, as a person from whose ability, virtue and integrity we might hope all the advantages which such an authority would enable him to derive to us, if your Lordship should think proper to bestow this honour upon him. Your Lordship does not need to be informed, and therefore we forbear to mention, the particular advantages to be enjoyed by the residence of a Commissary among us, especially at a time when enthusiasm, in its worst colors, is daily gaining ground. We flatter ourselves with hopes of your Lordship's pardon and indulgence on this point, and beg to assure your Lordship that we are,

May it please your Lordship,

Your Lordship's obedient servants,

HENRY CANER,
SAMUEL SEABURY,

JOHN BEACH,
EBEN'R PUNDERSON,

RICH'D CANER.

[*Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Bishop of London:—Extract.*]

Stratford, in New-England,

September 5th, 1742.

May it please your Lordship,

This letter accompanies another to your Lordship from my brethren of the Clergy in this colony, wherein they humbly represent the necessity, or, at least, the great advantage of a Commissary to be resident among us, by reason of our great distance from Boston, which, at a medium, is between 150 and 200 miles.

On this occasion I humbly beg leave to join my voice with theirs to the same purpose, (for I do believe, with submission to your Lordship,) that it would be a very considerable means for the promoting the interests of religion and order among us; especially considering how much the Church has increased here within these few years. When I came here there were not one hundred adult persons of the Church in this whole colony, whereas now there are considerably more than two thousand, and at least five or six thousand, young and old; and, since the progress of this strange spirit of enthusiasm, it seems daily very much increasing.

My brethren have, indeed, done me the honour to mention my name to your Lordship. As to this, I beg leave to assure your Lordship that it is from their own motion, and not in the least owing to any influence of mine, that they have so done; and that if your Lordship shall think it fit, at all, to appoint a Commissary in this colony, I shall be very well satisfied to submit to any other person whom your Lordship shall think proper to appoint to preside over us.

May it please your Lordship,

Your Lordship's most dutiful

And most obedient son and servant,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[*Rev. Mr. Seabury to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

New-London, in New-England, Nov. 2d, 1742.

Reverend Sir,

At Hebron the Church increaseth. I had forty communicants present the last Sacrament. Mr. Barzillai Dean, whom my brethren of the clergy of Connecticut have desired and advised me to recommend to the Society's notice, has attended the Hebron Church the year past, (when I have not been there,) by reading a form of prayer out of the Liturgy of the Church, and sermons of the Church of England divines, to the great edification of the people. In compassion to them, I beg leave to lament to the honourable Society, that poor people's want of a resident minister, who, I am well sensible, might be far more useful to them than it is in my power to be; and to repeat their desire, that Mr. Dean might be permitted to come home for that charge.

At Simsbury, sixty-two miles from New-London, and eight miles west of Connecticut River, and about fifty miles up said river, there is also a large congregation of the Church of England. I have visited them twice in the year past; the last time there were one hundred and thirty adults, who, I was assured, were either real conformists, or desirous of instruction in the doctrine and worship of the Church. They beg to be recommended to the Society's charity, and I expect they will, in a little time, send the Society a token of their sincerity; a copy of a deed of fifty acres of choice land, which they have purchased for a glebe.

At Middletown, one of the most flourishing towns in Connecticut, and lying upon Connecticut River, thirty-two miles from the mouth, and forty miles from New-London, which I have visited twice the year past, there are thirty families of the Church of England, earnestly desiring to be mentioned to the venerable Society, in hopes of their future favours.

I am, Reverend Sir, yours, and the honourable Society's

Most humble and obedient servant,

SAMUEL SEABURY.

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[*Churchwardens of New-London to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

New-London, February 26th, 1742-3.

Reverend Sir,

The very great convulsions occasioned here, and in divers other places in this colony, by the breaking out of what is called the New Light, makes this a melancholy juncture to have our Church empty and unsupplied; and the more, in regard that the present discords having set sundry of the most cool and considering people on thinking and reading, there is a promising prospect of those inquiries into religion, ending in a thorough and well-weighed conformity to our Church; and this again makes it the more necessary that this Church should be made happy in the appointment of a missionary, who, for morals, learning and experimental knowledge in the present state of things, might be equal to the difficulties of the present times.

Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient humble servants,

NATHANIEL GREEN, } *Churchwardens.*
EDWARD PALMER, }

[*The Secretary to the Rev. Mr. Johnson, Missionary at Stratford.—Extract.*]

April 25th, 1743.

Reverend Sir,

In order to make some provision, as soon as may be, for those young men recommended by you, that have been educated at your neighbouring Colleges, and are desirous of entering into the service of the Society, they [the Society] are come to a resolution, that in all future appointments of catechists and schoolmasters, a principal regard shall be had to such persons as are already in, or intend to offer themselves candidates for holy orders; that, as vacancies happen, they may be filled with these young men after they have been

ordained Deacons and Priests, in England ; and then, with a small stipend, (but of not less than £20 per annum,) from the Society, it is proposed to fix them at places where the inhabitants are able and willing to give as much more, for their officiating to them in the holy functions ; and, as the greater missions become vacant, and they are found worthy, to advance them to them, while other deserving young men may succeed to the lesser.

I am, &c.,

P. B.,

(i. e., PHILIP BEARCROFT

[Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Secretary

Stratford, in New-England,

April 6th, 1743.

Reverend Sir,

Since my last I have baptised sixteen, whereof five were adults and of them four were negroes, and admitted sixteen to the Holy Communion, of which two were candidates for holy orders, whose names were Watkins and Lamson. The late enthusiasm is now abating, (though the venomous effects of it still prevail,) and has driven a great number into the Church, so that there are five or six places wanting ministers greatly, of which Simsbury the most, being at, by far, the greatest distance ; and there are five or six valuable young candidates that would gladly serve the Church, and to very good advantage, if they could be encouraged to go home for orders ; and, as the Society may think proper to make New-London vacant by removing Mr. Seabury, we should all be very glad if that place might be kept vacant till one or other of our candidates could go home for it. Mr. Thomson, whom I have several times mentioned as having long served the Church in a lay capacity, and done much good, would be a very suitable and useful person in that place. And I beg the Society to give us leave to recommend two or three in the fall, for new places, if possible, though it were with a

view of but small salaries. Indeed, I humbly hope the venerable Board will excuse us if the pressing necessity of the times should prevail upon us to recommend any one for orders, though we should not have opportunity to hear from you. Mr. Dean is said to have done good service at Hebron, and, I conclude, will be recommended by the Convention.

The Church in this town has so increased of late that our house will not hold us, which has obliged us to build a new Church, for which £1,500 of our money has been subscribed, and we have got timber and are going on vigorously. It is to be sixty feet long and forty-five feet wide, and twenty-four feet high to the roof; with a steeple sixteen feet square, to be one hundred and twenty feet high; and eight feet the Chancel, which is to have a library on one side and vestry on the other. And we should be very thankful if any generous benefactors could be found that would contribute books to our library, which are very much wanted, and would be most eagerly read by many of our people, who are very inquisitive after Christian knowledge.

My *Notitia Parochialis* is as follows:

I. No. of families in this town, about.....	400
II. No. of baptised here and places adjacent by the missionary of the town,	617
III. No. of baptised since my last, of which five were adults and of them were four negroes,	16
IV. No. of actual communicants here and at Ripton,	166
Of which, were admitted the last half year,....	16
V. No. of those that profess the Church, families,..	89
VI. No. of Dissenters from all the rest, Papists, only	1
VII. No. of heathens, beside anabaptised negroes,...	10
VIII. No. of converts, no remarkable instance, they being generally a sober people.	

I have drawn on the treasurer for my salary, due to last Lady-day, of the same date with this letter,

And remain, Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[From Mr. Stewart to the Secretary.—Extract.]

New-London, in New-England,

January 14th, 1743.

Reverend Sir,

The unhappy difficulties our Church in this town labours under at present oblige me, in behalf of the congregation and self, to give you the trouble of this. Some time ago the Rev. Mr. Seabury obtained the consent of the venerable Society to remove to Hempstead; the Rev. Mr. Morris was appointed to fill the vacancy, which (for some reasons) was not pleasing to the people, who made application to the Rev. Mr. Commissary Price, who, together with the Rev. Dr. McSparran, came hither, and after strict and impartial examination of both parties, the Rev. Mr. Morris resigned his claim to the Church. Now we have certain intelligence that some underhand endeavours are used here to fill our Church without our privity, with one of their own creatures, in particularly with one Mr. Dean, a person of no other attainments than what are usually acquired by the low education of some men in this country. We beg leave by you, Reverend Sir, humbly and with the deepest submission, to represent to our wise, charitable and truly provident patrons, the Society, that New-London, being the seat of his Majesty's custom-house and so the port of greatest note in the colony, and, in many other respects, as a city set on a hill which cannot be hid, a missionary of mean and ordinary abilities, who might, perhaps, discharge the duties of his function with advantage in the more enclosed, remote and obscure settlements, where defects and inconformity to rubric and canon might pass with less observation, would have a direct tendency to bring the Church here into contempt, and the more so, as the Independent minister of this town has a well established character, and is in every respect the most superior person of his order in this colony. Permit us, therefore, to implore the compassion of the venerable Board to a Church

like to be left in a tottering and ticklish condition ; and as none of the worthy gentlemen on the mission already in New-England have mentioned their desire of being removed to us, and as he that was appointed could not make us happy, we earnestly entreat that none may be sent that goes from this country but such as the Reverend Mr. Commissary Price will recommend to the venerable Society to be appointed to this Church. We have a good character of one Mr. Cleverty [?]* from some worthy gentlemen of the Clergy, and as he has been bred up in the Church, if we can prevail on him to go home for orders, doubtless he will make us happy and all easy ; but if we fail of him, and that no other to the Commissary's liking offers before he writes, then we humbly beg leave to rely on the choice of the venerable Board, and earnestly entreat that a gentleman regularly educated at home, and always bred up in the Church of England, may be singled out for the service of the Church here, which will be very unlikely to keep it's ground, much less to thrive, under the ministry of a man of incompetent capacity, tinctured with Independency, or, in the least, addicted to any kind of inconformity or vice.

[*Rev. Mr. Seabury to the Secretary.*]

Reverend Sir,

The last half year has produced nothing remarkable with regard to the Church, which continueth steadfast in the midst of the wildest enthusiasms ; a most extraordinary instance of which happened here, in the sixth day of this instant, being the Lord's-day, when a large congregation gathered in the street, made a fire, and, in the sight of the sun, burned a great number of books of divinity, and, among others, Bishop Beveridge's *Thoughts on Religion* ; and, on the next day, in a public assembly, threw down of wearing apparel to be burned to the value of one hundred pounds sterling, but by some means they were restrained from executing this last attempt.

* We think the name intended is Cleveland—Ep.

The Society will observe by the *Not. Paroch.*, here enclosed, that the communicants at New-London have increased, three of whom are late conformists from the Independents.

I have, since my last, beside my visit to Hebron, where the Church still prospers, visited Simsbury, sixty-two miles from New-London, where there is a great prospect of a flourishing Church.

For my last quarter's salary, due me the day of the date hereof, I have drawn in favour of Daniel Lothrop, which I hope the Society's treasurer will honour.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Yours, and the honourable Society's

Most obedient and most humble servant,

SAMUEL SEABURY.

New-London, March 25th, 1743.

[*Rev. Mr. Beach to the Secretary.*]

Reading, in New-England,

April 20th, 1743.

Reverend Sir,

The enclosed is the state of my parish, which is very little altered in this last half year. My people are not at all shaken, but rather confirmed in their principles by the spirit of enthusiasm that rages among the Independents round about us, and many of the Dissenters, observing how steadfast our people are in their faith and practice, while those of their own denomination are easily carried away with every kind of doctrine, and are now sunk into the utmost confusion and disorder, have conceived a much better opinion of our Church than they formerly had, and a considerable number in this colony have lately conformed, and several Churches are now building where they have no minister. Indeed, there is scarce a town in which there is not a considerable number professing themselves of the Church of England, and

very desirous to have it settled among them; but God only knows when and how they can be provided for. Were there in this country but one of the Episcopal order, to whom young men might apply for ordination without the expense and danger of a voyage to England, many of our towns might be supplied which now must remain destitute. To express this opinion to the venerable Society (I am sensible) may be deemed impertinent, but I am moved to it by hearing so frequently numbers of serious people of our Church lamenting their unhappiness, that they can rarely enjoy that worship which they hunger and thirst after, there being so small a number of Clergymen in this country; while Presbyterians, Independents, and all sects are here perfect in their kind. But, although we have not the utmost that we could wish for, yet I bless God for the pious care and charity of the venerable Society, to which it is owing that so many hundreds of souls are provided for in this government; and had it not been for that, we have reason to think there would not have been at this day as much as one congregation in this colony worshipping God according to the Church of England.

I have this day drawn upon the treasurer for my half year's salary.

I am, Reverend Sir, yours,

And the venerable Society's

Obliged and obedient servant,

JOHN BEACH.

[*Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Secretary.*]

Stratford, in New-Englanda,

May 16th, 1743.

Reverend Sir,

We humbly presume upon the letter you wrote to the Rev. Mr. Morris, relating to Mr. Ebenezer Thomson, the

bearer hereof, to recommend him to the honourable Society for holy orders, and a mission to one part of Mr. Morris' charge, which has grown too extensive and burthensome for him; for, although your letter mentions him only with a view to his being appointed a schoolmaster, yet, considering how much greater necessity there is for ministers than schoolmasters, especially in these times of the great prevalence of enthusiasm and confusion in this country, we humbly hope the Society will be prevailed to admit that he be sent back in holy orders, with a mission, upon such a security as can at present be obtained of £20 sterling per annum by the people of Derby and Oxford; which, although it be not directly a land security, (which they are providing as soon as may be,) yet it may be equally depended upon as though it were so; since we can assure the Society that the men who have undertaken for it are sufficiently responsible, and that every parishioner is, in like manner, obligated to them as they are to the Society, and that they are a people that do truly deserve the Society's favours.

As to Mr. Thomson, we beg leave to give this testimony concerning him, that he has been bred up and received both the degrees of Bachelor and Master of Arts at Yale College, New-Haven, of nine years' standing; and ever since he left the College he has been very laborious, both in suffering much hardship and doing all the good offices he possibly could for promoting the interests of religion and the advancement of the Church of England in these parts, while at the same time he has had a family of his own to provide for, which now consists of a wife and four children, being above thirty years of age, and he has always proved himself a person of a very serious and virtuous life, an orthodox and faithful son of the Church as by law established, and entirely well affected to the present government. We do, therefore, humbly hope the Society will be pleased to admit him into their service, and beg they would inform us by him, when he returns, whether we may not, upon the same foot, recommend two or three more, there being as great a necessity for providing for Simsbury, Waterbury and Ridgefield, not to mention Hebron, which we conclude will be recommended by our breth-

ren in the eastward part of this government; and there are three other valuable candidates that beg leave to be employed as soon as may be, viz., Messrs. Watkins, Cole and Lamson, beside others that might be mentioned. We humbly take leave to subscribe ourselves,

The Society's, and, Reverend Sir,

Your most faithful and obedient humble servants.

[This letter, though written by Mr. Johnson, was in the name of and signed by all the Clergy.]

[Rev. Mr. Caner to the Secretary.]

Fairfield, in New-England,

May 19th, 1743.

Reverend Sir,

It is the chief design of this to lay before the venerable Society my *Not. Paroch.* For the last half year we have had no considerable alterations in the affairs of the Church of Fairfield, every thing remaining quiet and composed; though the constitution of this colony, both civil and ecclesiastical, has received sundry violent shocks from the effects of enthusiasm; but as I don't enter into affairs not immediately under my inspection, I have endeavoured to apply myself with diligence to cultivate a spirit of piety and sound religion among the members of my own charge. As the business of catechising is, confessedly, an important part of the pastoral care, so the experience I have had of its success in bringing both children and adults to a just and worthy apprehension of religion, has encouraged me to proceed in it with greater diligence. It would be of much use, for the furthering and promoting these, my labours, if the venerable Society would be pleased to bestow upon these children a few Catechisms, a dozen or two of Lewis' Exposition of the Catechism, half a dozen of Dr. Bray's Catechetical Instructions, and a dozen

of Common Prayer-Books, with Tate and Brady's Version of the Psalms. I mentioned this request to the venerable Society about a year ago, but not succeeding, the necessity of the children obliges me to repeat it.

I am, with the utmost respect and veneration,
The venerable Society's most dutiful and obedient,
And, Sir, your most humble servant,

HENRY CANER.

[*Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Archbishop of Canterbury.*]

Stratford, in New-England,
May 22d, 1743.

May it please your Grace,

This will wait on your Grace by Mr. Ebenezer Thomson, whom I have several times mentioned to the Society, and who may truly be recommended as a person who (having been bred and graduated in our neighbouring College) has for these several years undergone much hardship and done much service, as far as his lay capacity would admit, in promoting the interest of religion in general, and the Church of England in particular, in these parts, having thought nothing too much to do or suffer that has fallen in his way for the sake of so good a cause, and who now goes home, with a good character from all the Clergy in these parts, in hope of a mission to Derby. But if New-London should be yet a vacancy, I should rather wish him to be sent thither. And on this occasion I humbly entreat your Grace's interest with the Society, that whenever any vacancies happen to be made in this country, either by death or removal, the people may have leave, before they are filled, to procure the Clergy to recommend some young gentleman, if any offers from hence, as there scarcely ever fails to be several (as there are now) who would gladly serve the interests of the Society, to the utmost of their power, at any possible rate, and are generally much

more acceptable to the people, and, consequently, more successful in promoting the great ends of the Society, than those who come hither, strangers to the condition of things in these countries. I beg your Grace will excuse me that I mention this, and that I again suggest the necessity of Bishops, which I have fresh reason to do, from the great prevalence of enthusiasm, and especially that mad sort of it which obtains among the Moravians to the westward, who are likely to make the greater progress, to the unspeakable damage of true religion, by means of having the Episcopal government among them. It is, indeed, very hard, that when enthusiasm and heresy have the advantage of Episcopacy to propagate them, the truth of the orthodox Church of England should not have the like advantage, for the defence and propagation of that. I beg your Grace's prayers and blessing, and remain, may it please your Grace, your Grace's most dutiful son and most obedient, humble servant,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[*Rev. Mr. Seabury to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

New-London, June 5th, 1743.

Reverend Sir,

But truth obligeth me to say that the prospect of a large Church at Hebron is not so good as formerly, because the followers of Mr. Whitefield, Mr. Tennant, &c., do extremely abound there; the dissenting teacher at Hebron having gone the greatest lengths in pretensions to inspiration and the sensible feeling of the Spirit, as well as into the greatest excesses of meetings almost every day and night. And I should the more rejoice in a resident minister there, because the same spirit of Methodism prevails mightily at New-London, increaseth my care and labours, and renders my absence on Sundays of dangerous consequence. The conformists, both at New-London and Hebron, indeed, are steadfast to the Church.

though they are very much alarmed by the new doctrines and new propagation of religion, the effects of which are really surprising. Those people have meetings in New-London almost every night or day, and 'tis not uncommon (as I am apprised by persons of good sense and integrity) to see ten or more seized at once with violent agitations, many incapable of any decency, crying out for their damned estate, so past speaking at all, or so much, indeed, as being unable to stand, fall down, as they pretend, with the weight of their guilt; and the most of those continuing thus violently exercised (as they say with conviction) but a few hours, do then receive comfort. The Spirit of God, they say, witnesses with their spirits, that they are converted and born again; then follow immediately such raptures and transports of joy as are more surprising than their distresses. New-London has been for a week together in such a tumult that I was afraid the people would have been beside themselves. I have had my house full of people, some under those distresses, and others surprised at the conduct of their neighbours, though I thank God I have never seen any person in this way, but, by cool reasoning and by plain expositions of the terms of reconciliation with God, they have been brought off from their amazing apprehensions to a just notion of the doctrines of repentance and remission of sins; and, beside my attendance at home for many days together on people thus frightened, I have been invited to preach to a numerous congregation at Lyme, about seven or eight miles from New-London, who never heard the Liturgy many of them, and who expressed great satisfaction in my explanation of those doctrines, about which New-England seems at present so much perplexed.

I remain your poor, though faithful servant,

SAMUEL SEABURY.

[*Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Secretary.*]

*Stratford, in New-England,
September 30th, 1743.*

Reverend Sir,

I am most humbly thankful to his Grace and the rest of the honourable Board, for their kind reception of my letters and for the favourable notice they have taken of what I suggested, and the excellent scheme they have concerted for providing for such young men as offer themselves candidates from hence, (of whom the number is still increasing,) as well as that of places where they might be advantageously situated; and people seem, in several places, well disposed to give all the security they can for £20 sterling per annum, and are contriving to lay out uncultivated lands for glebes, which, in the course of time, may be very valuable, though it must be some years before they can be cultivated so as to do much toward the support of an incumbent. An hundred acres have been lately laid out for the perpetual use of the Church, within the bounds of this town, which is now worth about £20 sterling.

I lately opened a new Church at Ripton, where the people hope, in due time, to have some young man to be placed as my assistant. On the Sunday following, the dissenting teacher, one Mills, whose praise is in the journal, being a great admirer of Mr. Whitfield, reviled and declaimed against my sermon, which was on the subject of relative holiness and the reverence due to the house of God. He insisted that there is no more holiness in a Church than under an oak tree, &c.; and soon after some of his followers put his doctrine in practice, by defiling the Church with ordure in several places.

This zealous man gave out, when Mr. Whitfield first appeared, that their employing and encouraging that great reformer would utterly destroy the Church, root and branch; but now finding the event to be the entire reverse of his predictions, he is grown out of all patience with us. In the

mean time, while they are daily spitting out their impotent venom against us, I thank God we have a blessed spirit of peace and charity, and of zeal and unanimity, while every other Christian virtue is happily prevailing among my people, who are carrying on our new Church in the neatest manner, and with great dispatch, it being within a few months raised and now almost covered, and we have had several new families added, and more seem likely to follow them; but I cannot expect any enlargement of my salary from the people here till they have got through the great expense of building.

I am in much concern for the great damage I fear the Church in these parts will sustain by Mr. Seabury's removal, and Mr. Morris' succeeding him at New-London. This gentleman had the misfortune to have but little esteem among the people where he had officiated, and to be much despised by many others. I have faithfully laboured, both with him and them, to prevent this misfortune, but so the event has proved, which put the people of New-London into a terrible consternation, when they heard he was appointed for them, so that they were unwilling to admit him into their Church till his character should be cleared up; and applied to the Commissary to inquire into the grounds of that general disesteem he laboured under, but nothing has yet been done about it. They were advised by the Clergy here, in the mean time, out of duty and gratitude to the Society, to admit him into their Church, which, upon our advice, they immediately did, but yet depend upon the Commissary to take cognizance of the affair. What he proposes to do I have not heard, but whatsoever the result be, (though I earnestly wish otherwise,) I doubt there is little reason to expect the people there will be happy in him, or he in them, and I believe it would be well for both if they were otherwise provided for. New-London is a place of considerable importance to this government, and the Church there was likely to flourish in a good degree; and it grieves me very much, that this unhappy affair should be an hindrance to it. I should not have said this much, but that I have been earnestly solicited by that people to mention something of it, and that it looks unavoid-

able that the Society will be troubled with it first or last; but I shall add no more, unless the Society shall have occasion to inquire of me and my brethren about it, and shall only subjoin my *Not. Paroch.*, which is as follows:

I. No. of families within the bounds of this town, I am told, is about.....	400
II. No. of baptised here and in places adjacent by the minister of this town,.....	644
III. No. since my last, of which three were adults,..	12
IV. No. of actual communicants here and at Ripton, about.....	170
Of which, admitted this last half year,.....	10
V. No. of those that profess the Church, families,..	92
VI. No., all the rest Presbyterians and Independents, Papists, none.	
VII. No. of heathens, beside many unbaptised ne- groes,.....	10
VIII. No. of converts, &c., no remarkable instance, they being generally a sober, virtuous people.	

I have drawn on the treasurer for my salary to Michaelmas, and remain the Society's most faithful and obliged,

And, Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

SAM'L JOHNSON.

[Rev. Mr. Beach to the Secretary.]

Reading, in New-England,

October 20th, 1743.

Reverend Sir,

I beg the venerable Society's direction in an affair I am just now perplexed with. There are about twenty families professing the Church at New-Milford and New-Fairfield, which are about fifteen miles hence. I preach to them several times in a year, but seldom on the Lord's day. They frequently come to Church at Newtown, but, by reason of the

distance, they can't attend constantly, and their families very seldom, and, when they can't come to Church, they meet together in their own town, and one of their number reads some part of the common prayer and a sermon. They are now building a Church, and hope in time to have a minister settled among them. But the Independents, to suppress this design in its infancy, having the authority in their hands, have lately prosecuted and fined them for their meeting to worship God according to the common prayer, and the same punishment they are like to suffer for every offence in this kind, although it is the common approved practice of the same Independents to meet for worship in their own way when they have no minister; but what is a virtue in them is a crime in our people. The same is like to be the case in many other towns, in which people professing the Church are so far distant from a settled minister, that they cannot constantly attend the worship of God with him.

The case of these people is very hard; if, on the Lord's day, they continue at home, they must be punished; if they meet to worship God according to the Church of England in the best manner they can, their mulct is still greater; and if they go to the Independent meeting in the town where they live, they must endure the mortification of hearing the doctrine and worship of the Church vilified, and the important truths of Christianity obscured and enervated by enthusiastic and antinomian dreams. Now I should be thankful if the venerable Society would direct me what course to advise these people to, and if I might receive a particular instruction to take care of those professing the Church in New-Milford and New-Fairfield as part of my parish. I believe it would put me into a better capacity to protect them from the insults of their Independent neighbours. I have, this half year, baptised eighteen children, and admitted several more persons to the Lord's Supper. The inclosed is the state of my parish. I have this day drawn for my half year's salary.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Yours and the Society's

Most obedient servant,

JOHN BEACH.

[Rev. Mr. Caner to the Secretary.—Extract.]

Fairfield, in New-England,

November 30th, 1743.

My parish has received no diminution and but little increase since my last ; I beg leave, therefore, to refer to my *notitia parochialis* inclosed for what may be expected as to the present state of the Church in Fairfield. At Norwalk, Stamford and Ridgefield, where my brother chiefly officiates, there have been large accessions made to the Church of late, chiefly of persons who appear to have a serious sense of religion, and whose good example will, I trust, have a happy influence upon others. Where the late spirit of enthusiasm has most abounded, the Church has received the largest accession. Many of those deluded people, having lost themselves in the midst of error, wearied in the pursuit, as their passions subsided, sought for rest in the bosom and communion of the Church ; and others, reflecting upon the weakness of their former dependence, which left them exposed to such violent disorders, have likewise thought proper to take shelter under the wings of the Church. Norwalk, Stamford, and the neighbouring towns, have been much visited with this spiritual malady, but at Fairfield it has never obtained, though it has been often attempted to be introduced by Mr. Whitfield, and many of his followers. An epidemical sickness has prevailed in the towns last mentioned this fall, and, among others, my brother has been confined by it above two months, which has greatly increased my burthen, the care of all these western Churches thus falling upon me, so that my time has been wholly taken up in visiting the sick and preaching from town to town.

[*The Churchwardens of Wallingford to the Secretary.*]

Wallingford, in New-England,

December 1st, 1743.

Reverend Sir,

We, the inhabitants of Wallingford, members of the Church of England, make bold on behalf of ourselves and at the request of our brethren inhabiting in the neighbouring towns of Guilford and Branford, to inform you that we are twenty-five masters of families that are members of said Church, and meet together every Lord's day and edify ourselves, as well as we can, by reading; and while the Reverend Mr. Morris was in these parts, we were edified to our great comfort; our number then increased, and many more were coming in to join us, but he being removed from us, and Mr. J. Lyon cannot attend us, we are now destitute, and our dissenting brethren from year to year are distressing us with executions for meeting-houses, rates, steeples, and bells for them; so that our present melancholy circumstances crave your good offices with the honourable Society. We are willing to do the best we can toward the support of a minister, and make no doubt but in two or three years' time we shall be able to raise £20 sterling per annum toward the support of a minister. We humbly pray we may be assisted with a minister, and, might we choose for ourselves, we having experienced the Rev. Mr. Morris, would heartily wish he might be the person; and could a method be found for quelling the perpetual demands of our dissenting brethren for meeting-houses, rates, &c., it would greatly add to the growth and consolation of our distressed Churches, and we, as in duty bound, shall ever pray.

HENRY BATES, } *Churchwardens,*
JOHN WARD, } *and several others.*

[*Rev. Dr. Johnson to the Secretary.*]

Stratford, in New-England,

January 10th, 1743-4.

Reverend Sir,

I most humbly thank you for your good offices to Mr. Thomson, and for your kind and affectionate letter by him, and your readiness therein expressed, to do any thing in your power toward promoting the interest of our holy religion and the best of Churches in these parts of the world; and, among other things, I was much obliged to you for what you kindly suggested to Mr. Thomson about the report you had heard of my going to meetings, and suffering my son to do so; and I beg leave to make my apology, and explain to you the truth of this matter, and entreat you would make that use of it, in my behalf, which you shall think proper, and may seem to you needful; and even to read this letter to the Society, if there appears to you occasion for it, in order that I may be freed from any mischief that may arise to me from any misrepresentations that may have been laid before them; for, I find I have enemies disposed to do me a damage, and those, I believe, some whom I have endeavoured to serve to my utmost, and for whom my tenderness and compassion has sometimes put me upon doing kind offices, even when I had too much reason to fear the public might suffer by it, an instance of which may possibly come into your hands. It is true Mr. Morris, in his great zeal, did complain of me to the Convention on those accounts, but I wrote to the Commissary, and gave him such an account of my conduct as I presume satisfied him, he having never remarked any thing to me, to the contrary, since.

As to my own going to meeting, the fact is, I did go to hear Mr. Whitfield once, which I presumed it would not be offensive for me to do, he being in orders in our Church, and not then under any censure: and, indeed, I thought it my

duty so to do, that I might be under the better advantage to prevent the mischief I apprehended from him and his followers among the people; and the event has proved that I have, by this means, been under the greater advantage to withstand and quiet the late madness and enthusiasm that has prevailed among us, and make it turn to the great increase of the Church.

It was for the same reason that I, with two or three of my brethren of the Clergy, went one night in the dark, and perfectly *incognito*, among a vast crowd, to see and hear Davenport's managements, whom we heard rave about a quarter of an hour, and then went away, without having been known there; and twice in my travels, by mere accident, I happened, in the night, (for these mad meetings were chiefly in the night,) to come unexpectedly upon private houses where these wild meetings were carrying on, but soon left them, unknown; by which means I happened to be an eye-witness of those strange doings, which I gave the Society an account of, and have since made an advantage of my observations on those occasions to their confusion. Such have been the instances of my going to meeting, for which I have been faulted by some over-zealous people, whose venomous spirit toward the Dissenters has very much hurt the Church, while I have made the best advantage of what I observed, and with very good success, to do her service; and this much for myself.

As to my son, it is indeed a great mortification to him and me, that I am obliged to send him to a dissenting College, or deny him any public education at all; and rather than deny him a collegiate education, I confess I do not forbid him going to meeting when he can't help it, to which he is himself so averse, that nothing but mere necessity would put him upon it. He comes home to Church once in three weeks or a month, at least, at the communion, if possible, being fourteen miles distant, and as often as there is Church there, he goes to West Haven, which is four miles distant; at other times he stays at home in his chamber as much as he can, and the rector and tutors indulge him as much as they dare, being friendly disposed to serve me as much as they are able

without hazarding the resentment of the government that supports them. This is the fact with respect to my son. And after all, if my method of proceeding is not what the Society approves of, I am heartily willing to stand corrected, and entirely to conform to their instructions, and in hopes of a line from you, on this subject, for my direction.

I remain, Reverend Sir,

Your most obliged and obedient,

Humble servant,

SAM'L JOHNSON.

P. S.—Since my last, here is an ingenious gentleman, one Mr. Prince, of very considerable learning, having been fifteen years a fellow of Harvard College, in Cambridge, who has conformed to the Church, and lives at present in this town, and desires to serve the Church in holy orders, and would willingly go home in the spring; and here is an honest neighbouring dissenting teacher, who will very soon appear for the Church, and probably bring the greatest part of his congregation with him, and I wish it may be in the Society's power to settle a small pension upon him, and send him back in holy orders to his people, if he should wait on them for that purpose.

Yours, as above,

S. J.

[*Clergy of Connecticut to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

Norwalk, March 28th, 1744.

Reverend Sir,

And we can with the same integrity recommend the people of Stamford, Greenwich and Horse Neck, whose petition for a minister to reside among them was laid before the Society by the Rev'd Isaac Brown, when he went home for orders. These people have been much persecuted by the dissenting

government, for when they would have rewarded the Rev. Mr. Wetmore for his monthly attendance in officiating among them, by paying their proportion of the rates, according to an express law of the colony, they were prevented by a very oppressive judgment of the court; and though they have been put to great difficulties, yet the Church has much increased, especially since Mr. Richard Caner was sent to Norwalk, and there is a good prospect of their increasing much more, if they can obtain Mr. Miner to settle among them, now the confusions of Methodism are prevailing, as they have done very much of late, in that part of the government.

Mr. Miner is a gentleman well qualified to serve that people, and they have an earnest desire to obtain him. He is a late convert from the Dissenters, convinced of the necessity of conformity, chiefly by occasion of the late mischiefs of enthusiasm. He was for above twelve years a teacher among the Dissenters, much esteemed by them both for his preaching and good behaviour.

We subscribe, with our humblest duty to the Society,

Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servants,

S. JOHNSON,

RICHARD CANER,

JAS. WETMORE,

JAMES LYONS,

HENRY CANER.

[*Churchwardens, at Simsbury, to the Society.—Extract.*]

Simsbury, April 10th, 1744.

Reverend Sir,

We have built a convenient Church, and purchased a glebe of fifty acres adjacent to our Church, and in good order; we have been a Society for four years, and have almost constantly for that time carried on sermons and a form of prayer, and yet, notwithstanding all this, the Independents, by force and under a pretence of authority, have carried away our

estates, to support their teachers, to build their meeting-houses, and procure their parsonages. Enthusiasm and error have much prevailed among us; but of late they have run into parties, so that, in a meeting-house adjacent to us, they cannot agree about calling a teacher, and many of them and of our neighbours, by the occasional visits of the Reverend Mr. Lyons, incline to the Church, having nothing so much to object against as the want of a settled minister. Our Clergy have advised us to Mr. Gibbs, as a modest, virtuous gentleman and well qualified to serve us, but as we are not able to support him suitably to the dignity of that station and character, we trust that the venerable Society, in their great wisdoms, will allow us their charitable assistance.

We are, Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servants,

WILLIAM CASE,
JNO. CHRISTIAN MILLER, } *Churchwardens.*

[*Rev. Mr. Punderson to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

N. Groton, April 9th, 1744.

Reverend Sir,

As I am at present the only missionary in this half of the government and part of Rhode Island, I would earnestly recommend it to the venerable Board, as soon as possible, to supply the vacancy at New-London, and, if possible, to erect a mission at Stonington and Charlestown, where the harvest would, undoubtedly, be very plenteous, were there a resident labourer of a virtuous character. I preached at Charlestown last Sunday to a considerable congregation.

I am, Reverend Sir, yours,

And the Society's real friend and servant,

EBEN'R PUNDERSON.

[*Rev. Mr. Lyons to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

Derby, May 8th, 1744.

Reverend Sir,

At a place called Guilford, where there are two Independent congregations in the compact part of the town, and where, also, the worship of our Church has not till lately made its entrance, I have preached several times, baptised three children, and eight families (consisting of thirty-six children beside adults) have declared their conformity, and in testimony thereof, have subscribed a paper which I formed for that purpose, and many of them have occasionally communicated since that time. At Milford and New-Haven there are a few members of our Church, but care is taken, at the last of those places especially, that they should not increase, the rector and tutors of the College there having, of late, suffered none of the students (except the children of professed Churchmen) to attend my lectures. At West Haven I have baptised two children and officiated frequently. At Derby and Oxford I have had sixteen new communicants, at the last of which places I have baptised seven children, and catechised at Derby; but having committed the care of registering the baptisms there to one of the Churchwardens, he obstinately refused to show me the lists, which naturally induces me to present my venerable patrons with a short sketch of my grievances at this same Derby. As soon as they had advice of my appointment, and from what country I came, and, indeed, before I arrived among them, they abused me, calling me an "Irish Teague and Foreigner," with many other reflections of an uncivilized and unchristian kind; they boasted they should soon discover me, meaning, I suppose, they would either find or fasten some thing upon me relating to my character or conduct whereby they might get rid of me. Under these disadvantages I entered on that part of my mission, but, by care and diligence, conciliated myself to them, 'till the Reverend Mr. Thompson, of Scituate, came

up amongst them, whose conduct kindled a fire that is not extinguished. In my absence, and while he was among them, they appointed a vestry without my privity, and let me know nothing of their intents till four days before that meeting, of their own appointment; meanwhile, they secreted from me the Society's letter, and when I insisted on seeing it, asserted they had no occasion to consult me, nor make me privy to their purposes, so I did not see it till two days before that meeting. From Mr. Thompson's conduct and theirs, I became clearly convinced that they were mutually of the mind to bring him into my mission. At their instance, I indicated a regular vestry, and at that, the appointment of a committee to find a suitable tract of land for a glebe. I encouraged them all in my power, and exhorted them to order, peace and unanimity, but to little effect, for at a vestry held in Easter Week, some of their leading men asserted they would not assist in getting a glebe unless on condition to have their own countryman to fill the Church. They alleged they were acquainted with the venerable Society's mind in that matter, which, they said, had left them to their choice, and had agreed to make it a rule that every country should be furnished with missionaries of their own raising (as they phrase it.) It would be too tedious to record all the abuse and insults I have received at Derby; so many and so severe, that some of themselves, more moderate than the rest, remonstrated to them the danger they were in of losing the mission by their abuses to me. They answered, they did not care if it was sunk, they could soon renew it, and had rather have it sunk in the deepest part of the sea than have it in an itinerancy; though I have officiated in that place above one-third of my time, and am, through God's goodness, hitherto irreprovable in doctrine and practice. My New-England brethren of the Clergy here are so fond of their own countrymen that, were there never so much occasion for it, either here or at the Board, they would be at little pains to do my character justice; and in a little time they hope to get rid of missionaries that are not country born, or, at least, that no more of European education be sent; and then what face the Church here will put on, is as easy as it is unpleasant to foresee. If

the insults of Derby are not redressed, it will be in vain to send any European, especially into this colony, whether as resident or itinerant.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

JAMES LYONS.

[*Rev. Mr. Caner to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

Fairfield, in New-England,

May 10th, 1744.

Reverend Sir,

The present state of my own parish does not yield me all the satisfaction I could wish. The late enthusiasm never made much progress here, and, indeed, the temper of the people is generally rather faulty in the other extreme, a cold Laodicean disposition, an inconsiderate neglect of the great duties of religion, a visible deadness and formality, is what, at present, gives me most concern, and prevents the success of my administrations.

I am, Reverend Sir, your most obedient,

And most humble servant,

HENRY CANER.

[NOTE.—It may be a question worth examination, whether the enthusiasm complained of was not, in its fractionary effect, the occasion, if not the cause, of the Laodicean coldness complained of.]

The Members of the Church in Northbury to the Secretary.]

Northbury, May 28th, 1744.

The representation and humble petition of the members of the Church of England, in Northbury, in the township of Waterbury, in the colony of Connecticut, in New-England, and the members of said Church, dwelling in other places nearly adjoining, humbly sheweth :

We were all educated in this land, under the instruction of Independent teachers, or (as they would be called) Presbyterians; and consequently, we were prejudiced strongly against the Church of England from our cradles, until we had the advantage of books from your Reverend missionaries and others, whereby we began to see with our own eyes that things were not as they had been represented to our view; and Mr. Whitfield, passing through this land, condemning all but his adherents, and his followers and imitators, by their insufferable enthusiastick whims and extemporaneous jargon, brought in such a flood of confusion amongst us, that we became sensible of the unscriptural method we had always been accustomed to take in our worship of God, and of the weakness of the pretended constitution of the Churches (so called) in this land; whereupon, we fled to the Church of England for safety, and are daily more and more satisfied we are safe, provided the purity of our hearts and lives be conformable to her excellent doctrine; and that it is the best constituted Church this day in the world.

HENRY COOK,

ISAAC CASTEL,

BARNABY FORD,

JOHN HOW,

THOMAS CLASELEE.

[*Rev. Mr. Caner to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

Fairfield, in New-England,

November 13th, 1744.

Reverend Sir,

We daily expect a new storm from the daily irregular excursions of Mr. Whitfield; he has not yet begun his progress, having been under afflictions for the loss of his only child, and, since that, visited with dangerous sickness himself; his sickness still continues, and whether it shall please God to continue him a scourge to these Churches is yet uncertain.

[*Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

Stratford, in New-England,
February 12th, 1744-5.

Reverend Sir,

I observe the Society has come to a resolution not to receive any for the future, without liberty first obtained for them to go home, &c. This order, as far as I was concerned, I shall dutifully observe; but, as it is expressed in the most general terms, I beg leave to ask whether it is to be understood of any at all, even though their view were only to supply any vacancy that may happen, or whether it be not rather the Society's meaning, that none shall go with a view to any new mission to be erected, without leave first obtained. It is of this last case, I humbly presume, the Society would be understood, because it would seem hard, and might be very detrimental to the Church, for the people to be so long destitute, as the time would require to send and receive the Society's answer.

I humbly hope this resolution of the Society will not be understood to look back so as to defeat the hopes of Messrs. Miner and Lamson, when it shall please God to deliver them from their captivity.*

As to Mr. Prince, who is now teaching a school, all I can say of him from my own knowledge is, that ever since he has been in those parts, which is now almost two years, his behaviour has been not only entirely unexceptionable, but very amiable. He was, it is true, rejected from Harvard College, but I understood it not to be from immorality, but for his resolutely, and, perhaps, too warmly adhering to what he thought right, and publishing his reasons (not since answered) in a controversy among them relating to the government of the College; which occasioned, indeed, great obloquy

* They had probably been captured on their passage, and carried prisoners to France, as several of those who went for orders were.

against him, and made the Convention doubtful about employing him, but they at length came to this conclusion, (if I remember right,) that if he brought sufficient certificates of his good behaviour for two years from that time, which was last May, they should be willing to recommend him. As to his writing against the three creeds, it is utterly groundless; all the pretence for it was, that about twelve years ago he published a piece upon the resurrection of Christ, wherein he has a slant of two or three words about composing creeds, or something to that effect, and he told me at that time he had imbibed some loose latitudinarian notions from reading Chubb, and the Independent Whig, &c., which he had long since been convinced were very erroneous, of which he gave satisfaction to Dr. Cutler by a letter to him. However, as to all these things, I beg leave to refer you to the Rev. Mr. Davenport, a very worthy member of the Society, now going home, who is much better acquainted with what concerns Mr. Prince, in that government, than I am.

I remain, Reverend Sir,

Your most faithful and most obedient servant,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Secretary.—Extract.]

Stratford, in New-England,

March 30th, 1745.

Reverend Sir,

And as there is such a growing disposition among the people in many places to forsake the tenets of enthusiasm and confusion, so there is a like disposition increasing in the College, where there are already ten children of the Church, and several sons of dissenting parents, that are much inclined to conform. I was there last week, and was much pleased with their exercises; among the rest, there was one layman, a person of good character, (beside Messrs. Marsh and Mansfield, mentioned in my last,) who desired me to mention him to the

Society as a candidate for the ministry. Thus, *the harvest is large and the labourers not a few*, who would gladly be employed, and be content with as moderate wages as can be thought tolerable, whenever the Society shall be in a disposition to employ them, or any of them.

Though the madness of the late enthusiasm has much abated, the venom of it still continues, and, I fear, rather increases, and operates in a violent manner in many places against the Church; so that no sooner does any person in authority appear for the Church, but he is soon displaced, and some bitter creature set up by the government in his room; and in some places, notwithstanding the law they had made in our favour, they have of late taxed the lands of the Church people in common with the Dissenters, toward the support of their ministers. I have myself lately had no less than ten pounds of our money forced from me, toward maintaining three of the worst creatures in the government, being taxes raised upon some lands I had in the places where they were teachers. But what I would mention as the greatest grievance of this kind, is the case of the Church people at Derby, who are forced to pay such a land tax in their own town to a dissenting teacher and meeting-house in one of their villages, (when they have a Church of their own to finish and a minister to provide for,) the amount of which, in the whole, will be very considerable.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your most obliged, obedient, humble servant,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[Rev. Mr. Lyons to the Secretary.—Extract.]

New-Haven, May 30th, 1745.

Reverend Sir,

The conformists at West Haven increase, and they have almost finished the Church. In many other places (too tedious to mention) our Church begins to gain ground in

spite of many disadvantages. At Wallingford and Cheshire, the Dissenters take, by distress, the Churchmen's estates, to build, repair, and keep clean their meeting-houses; and, though they have had several trials in our courts, they always lose their cases. The people of Derby still continue divided by a national spirit that prevails, and is industriously propagated by some of them and the neighbouring Clergy; however, after all attempts made, and unchristian means used, by some to render me unacceptable, (by hauling me once and again before an Independent justice of the peace, as I mentioned in some former account,) yet, through the goodness of God, my innocence and integrity protected me, and I continue irreprovable, having a good understanding with the most of my extensive mission, and even with many of Derby, who are grieved with the irregular proceedings of that National party.

I am, Reverend Sir, yours, &c., &c.,

JAMES LYONS.

[Rev. Mr. Gibbs to the Secretary.—Extract.]

Simsbury, June 26th, 1745.

Reverend Sir,

The Church seems to be in a promising condition, and I am not without hope that there will be a great increase in time. I have now twenty communicants, and have baptised eight. The Churchmen here have been much oppressed by the Dissenters, who have taken from them seventy pounds toward building their meeting-house and settling their minister.

I remain, Sir,

Your most humble and obedient servant,

WILLIAM GIBBS.

[*Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

Stratford, in New-England,

September 2d, 1745.

Reverend Sir,

I am very glad the Society has made the providing a parsonage-house the conditions of the continuance to old missions. This is a very reasonable and happy exchange for a former proposal of making an house and glebe the condition of opening new missions, which was very difficult and discouraging to many new places.

I have, by favour of Mr. Vesey, seen the sermon and abstract you mention relating to the Mosquito Indians, but do not know of any missionary willing to move to that distance, it being very remote from these parts, and thought to be an unhealthy climate. Mr. Prince, however, is willing to undertake, if the Society shall think proper to employ him, and I am informed that the Commissary is well satisfied with respect to the objections that were alleged against him, and is willing to recommend him; and in order thereunto, I have sent him a good testimonial from these parts where he has resided chiefly above two years. I hope he may be the bearer of this letter, or, at least, go home in the spring, and am persuaded if he can have his health, he may do very good service in such a mission as you propose.

As I may not have opportunity again after Michaelmas, I beg leave to add that I have continued, once in awhile, to visit Middletown and Guilford, where there continues to be a good prospect, and the College remains in the same disposition as when I wrote last. Another promising youth offers his service, one of Bishop Berkeley's scholars, whose name is *Colton*, and he, with the other two I mentioned before, *Mansfield* and *Lyman*, beg leave to hope they may be employed by the Society about two years hence, when they will be of full age, and in the mean time are devoting themselves

to pursue such studies, under my direction, as may qualify them for it.

It is a mighty grief to us to hear of the death of our friend, Mr. Miner, the case of whose disconsolate widow and fatherless children is very pitiable; he would have been a very useful man if he had lived; nor do we yet hear since of Mr. Lamson. Would to God we had a Bishop to ordain here, which would prevent such unhappy disasters.

I remain, Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[*Rev. Mr. Punderson to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

N. Groton, October 8th, 1745.

Reverend Sir,

Since my last I have been to Stafford, preached and baptised some children. Mr. Payne, of whom I acquainted the Society in my last, proposes, by divine permission, (having obtained leave from the Society,) to come home next summer. He has only a wife and two children, and there is no missionary within near fifty miles, and the country pretty well inhabited.

The third Sunday in September I preached in New-London, desired the congregation to meet upon the next day, which they did, and voted to procure a house as soon as possible for their next missionary. One of the members of that Church has given a convenient and valuable spot of land for that purpose; they have generously subscribed to the building of said house, which I hope will be fit to live in by the beginning of next summer. I verily think it a piece of justice due to that congregation in general, to assure the Society that, according to their abilities, they are a generous good sort of people, and they continue firm and unshaken.

Reverend Sir, yours, and the Society's

Most obedient and obliged servant,

EBEN'R PUNDERSON.

[*The Churchwardens of West Haven to the Society.—Extract.*]

West Haven, October 26th, 1745.

Reverend Sir,

We beg leave to represent the state of our part of the mission to the venerable Board, as the parish of West Haven is small, and the inhabitants poor. The Dissenters were not able, after our conformity, to support their teacher by a ministerial rate, so that they have sold the glebe land, and had money out of the treasury, which, with some additions made by the parish, founded a bank, the interest of which supports their teacher, which weakens our hands and hinders the conformity of Dissenters, as they expect to contribute to the support of ours if they conform.

We are, Reverend Sir,

Your most obliged, humble servants,

JOHN HUMPHREVILE, }
JOSEPH PRINDLE, } *Churchwardens.*

[*Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

Stratford, in New-England,

26th March, 1746.

Reverend Sir,

I have once or twice mentioned the case of the people of our Church at Ripton, a parish of this town, under my care, where there are fifty-one families that have built a Church about eight miles from hence. They have been so undeniably importunate to have the service and sermons read among them to prevent their children from straggling and going to meeting, that I have this winter indulged their importunity

in permitting my son to read to them, whose services therein have been very acceptable to them, and they beg me to mention him to the Society, with their earnest desires that he may be allowed as a catechist and reader for them, and would allow him seventy or eighty pounds our currency, which is equal to about ten pounds sterling. As to my son, I shall only beg leave to say, that I thank God he has good abilities, and that I have spared no pains to cultivate them in the best manner circumstances will admit of. He will shortly enter his 20th year, and has took his Bachelor's degree almost two years ago; the chief Greek and Latin classics were then so familiar to him, that he merited Bishop Berkeley's premium in this College, and he has taken much pains to qualify himself in all other parts of learning; particularly, he has read much of our best English philosophers and divines for his years, and is now studying the Hebrew, and Antiquities, both sacred and profane. But whether he will make divinity or law the business of his life, he has not yet resolved.

I am, Reverend Sir, your most obliged,

And most obedient, humble servant,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[*Rev. Mr. Caner to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

Fairfield, in New-England,

November 10th, 1746.

Sir,

As to Norwalk and Stamford, I am afraid the interest of the Church loses ground in those places, for want of a more constant service than I can supply them with. And I cannot help repeating my earnest desire that the Society will either supply these places, or, by some further provision, enable me to supply them by an assistant. Here are sundry young gentlemen, ready to enter into the Society's service, who would be very acceptable to these people. The Society

will excuse me that I am solicitous for the welfare of a people, chiefly, under God, the fruit of my own diligence, that I may not see the labour of almost twenty years bestowed in vain.

I am the venerable Society's

Most dutiful and obedient, and, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

HENRY CANER.

[*Rev. Mr. Gibbs to the Secretary.*]

Simsbury, New-England,

October 22^d, 1746.

Reverend Sir,

I presume to write, at the same time hoping and wishing for the prosperity of the Church here, which is environed among a number of its enemies, who are continually wishing for its overthrow. The Independents, who have been heretofore very rude, bold and insolent toward those of the Church, by forcing and obliging them to pay to the Dissenters, do yet, some of them, persist in the same manner, and have obliged a communicant of my Church, though, indeed, belonging to another town, viz., Farmington, about fifteen miles distant, to pay toward the repairing of their meeting-house, and threatened hard for his refusing to pay.

And another communicant of mine, of the same town, do they very much threaten. Thus bold and daring are they to all that profess themselves of the Church.

I would further acquaint the honourable Society that the prejudices of the people toward the Church wear off by degrees, and they begin to be more enlightened about it, and I am not wanting in my endeavours to instruct them as to the same.

I have baptised, since the eighth of May last, ten children, one of which I baptised at Litchfield, near thirty miles west of Simsbury, where I was desired to preach; and another at

Middletown, twenty-seven miles southward, and I have five new communicants added.

I pray God for the enlargement of the Church in these parts, and hope it may increase more and more, which is the earnest wish of him who subscribes himself,

The Society's most obedient

And humble servant,

WILLIAM GIBBS.

[*Rev. Mr. Punderson to the Secretary.*]

N. Groton, 6th October, 1746.

Reverend Sir,

As I am the only missionary the Society have at present in the eastern half of the government, I think it my duty, in the most pressing manner, to solicit the Society's further assistance to New-London, Charlestown and Hebron; especially New-London. In behalf of that people I can plead with great assurance of success, as they have complied with the terms on which the venerable Society suspended their assistance; having set up and covered a very good house which, in a few weeks, may be made a comfortable habitation.

With regard to Hebron, which I visit twice a year, and therein administer the Sacraments, I have this to observe, that when I was there last, which was the last day of August, there were about forty communicants, and six children baptised. The day following I preached them a sermon, after which they unanimously subscribed £303 10s. for the purchase of thirty acres of exceedingly good land, (the donor gave £30,) a deed of which I shall transmit with this letter, and beg leave earnestly to recommend to the venerable Board the supply of a people so steadfast and zealous, and who have not a missionary within near forty miles of them. I presume there would be as large an addition to them as to any congregation in the government, if they were supplied with a pious and faithful minister. The Thursday following, I

preached a sermon in Litchfield, about eighty miles from my house, where there is a considerable number of conformists, who performed their part of the divine service with propriety and reverence. I furnished them with some books, and trust there will be additions to them.

I must also beg leave to refresh the memories of the venerable Board with respect to the melancholy state of Charlestown, where there is great need of a resident missionary. The deed of forty acres of good land given to that Church, I hope has reached the Society 'ere this, having been sent with my letters of April 4th. The state of the Church in Groton and the adjacent towns remains much the same, but I hope will soon increase, the Independent teacher in this place having left his people, and 'tis the general opinion that they will not be able to settle another.

I am, Reverend Sir, yours, and the Society's

Most faithful friend and servant,

EBEN'R PUNDERSON.

[*Rev. Mr. Johnson to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

Stratford, in New-England,

October 1st, 1746.

Reverend Sir,

Since my last, I have received the Bible and Common Prayer-Books safe, for which we are all very thankful. My son continues to read and instruct the youth at Ripton with good success, and the Church there flourishes. I continue to visit them, and administer the Sacraments to them once in two or three months, and they are going on to finish their Church. My Church also flourishes in this parish, where two new families are added, and I have baptised twenty-four, and admitted eight communicants since last March, whereof one is a negro man. I have also visited Middletown and Guilford, where the Church keeps its ground, though I cannot say it

much increases for want of ministers. A love to the Church is still gaining in the College, and four more, whose names are Allen, Lloyd, Sturgeon and Chandler, have declared themselves candidates for holy orders; and there seems a very growing disposition toward the Church, in the town of New-Haven, as well as in the College, so that I hope there will, 'ere long, be a flourishing Church there. I have heretofore desired leave for Messrs. Dibble and Leaming to go for orders, and am now desired to ask the same for Messrs. Mansfield and Allen, as soon as the Society can be in a disposition to receive them. Mr. Cole, for whom I wrote long since, is, I doubt, discouraged, having heard nothing from him in a great while. I presume it probable, that leave was given him to go home, by Mr. Dean; but as we have not heard a word of him since he left London, we have too much reason to fear he is lost. If this should prove to be the case, (as Mr. Lyons is said to be removed, and Mr. Dean to have been appointed to succeed him at Derby,) the people there are very desirous that Mr. Mansfield may have leave to go for them, where they are providing a glebe; and Waterbury having also provided one, begs to have a minister for themselves, with Northbury and Litchfield, and that Mr. Cole may have leave to go for them, or one other of the candidates, if Mr. Cole be otherwise provided for. New-London is also providing a house, and Mr. Cole or Mr. Lloyd would do well for them.

I am, Reverend Sir, your most obliged

And most obedient, humble servant,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[*Rev. Mr. Caner to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

Fairfield, in New-England,

May 12th, 1746.

Sir,

I have not been favoured with an answer to either of my two letters of November and December past, requesting some further provisions for the Church at Norwalk. The suffer-

ing condition of that Church, notwithstanding my utmost care, obliges me to renew my request, and humbly beg that the venerable Society will give that people leave to recommend some young gentleman home, in their own favour, or make such other provision for them as the Society shall think proper. I mentioned in my last their having purchased a new house and garden spot for the use of a minister, to which they propose to add some convenient pasturage as soon as they have finished their new Church, which at present lies pretty heavy upon them. Beside the provision already made, they offer to raise twenty pounds sterling per annum, which I think they will be able to advance, because the taxes levied by the government here in favour of a minister amount to about fifteen pounds sterling, and they will doubtless exert themselves to raise five pounds more than what is exacted of them by law.

The Church of Norwalk is, I think, the largest and most promising Church in this colony, which makes me the more solicitous to have some better provision made for it than I am capable of bestowing that way consistently with a proper care of other Churches; and this, also, will, I hope, plead my excuse with the venerable Society for the repeated trouble I give them upon this subject.

As to Fairfield, nothing new or uncommon has occurred since my last. The condition of the Church is, I think, nothing worse, I am afraid I must add, nor much better, since my last account. Indeed, in these times of war and confusion, (in which we also have had our share,) which are often attended with greater degrees of licentiousness and corruption of manners, I am apt to flatter myself that our labour is not wholly lost, if we may be instrumental in preserving religion from decay, even though no great progress should be made in its advancement.

The particular state of these Churches will appear from the *notitia parochialis* enclosed, and to which I beg leave to refer.

I am the Society's most dutiful and obedient,

And, Sir, your most humble servant,

HENRY CANER.

[*Rev. Mr. Gibbs to the Secretary.*]

Simsbury, May 8th, 1746.

Reverend Sir,

I take the freedom to write, and, at the same time, represent the condition of the Church here. It is situated back of the great river Connecticut eight miles; close by are a number of large commodious towns, Hartford being the chief and a county town, and about ten miles from Simsbury. The Church here seems to be well situated, and I am not without hopes of its growth, notwithstanding it is environed and surrounded by so great a number of staunch enemies to it, and those who call themselves "new lights," who are of a bitter and inveterate spirit toward the Church. I have not been wanting since my being here in my endeavours to enlighten these people, in the Church, as to the feasts and fasts of the Church, and in teaching and catechising their children. I have spread about several books of the Society's, which have been very beneficial, Dr. King being very much in request.

I have belonging to the Church here forty families, twenty-six persons, communicants, and have baptised since July last thirteen children. I hope to see the Church prosperous and flourishing here; people's prejudices begin to wear more off, and I pray God to open their eyes that they may see and know better, and that they may be brought into the Church, that so we may glorify God with one heart and mind.

I beg leave to subscribe myself the Society's

Most obedient, humble servant,

WILLIAM GIBBS.

[*Rev. Mr. Punderson to the Secretary.*]

Groton, April 4th, 1746.

Reverend Sir,

It is with a very sensible pleasure that I can acquaint the venerable Society with the almost daily increase of our Church, and that the opinions of most sober, considerate persons grow more favourable toward it; particularly, I am rejoiced upon Mr. John Whitney's embracing the Church, and resolving, by divine Providence, with the Society's aid, to come over in the fall for holy orders. He is a person of an excellent moral character, good sense, and of a mild disposition. The people in New-London are very desirous (if they should not be supplied before) that he may be appointed for them. The conformists, also, of Stonington, where he lives, together with those of Charlestown and Westerly, are fond of having him, if the Society are able and willing to erect them into a mission. The harvest is truly great, and at present no labourer in this half of the government but myself, of the Episcopal order, and, with the most sincere gratitude, I bless God that my labours are not in vain. I esteem it a singular Providence, that in New-London the Church have lost none in their long vacancy, but wait with patience. A deed of the land given by a worthy member of the Church, which is, I suppose, worth £300 our money, will be transmitted with my letter; a frame of a house worth £100 is already got, and they are daily forwarding it.

Capt. Mumford, with whom Mr. Dean embarked, is not yet arrived; we fear he is taken or foundered. By him I had expectations of a letter from the venerable Society, whom I fervently pray God daily to enlarge, and make a more extensive blessing to mankind in general, and this land in particular.

I am, with the greatest respect, Reverend Sir,

Yours, and the Society's faithful friend and servant,

EBEN'R PUNDERSON.

[Rev. Mr. Beach to the Secretary.]

Reading, in Connecticut, in N. E.,

April 2d, 1746.

Reverend Sir,

All that I have at present to acquaint the venerable Society with, beside what is contained in the enclosed, is, that we have erected another Church at Newtown, which is forty-six feet long, thirty-five broad, and twenty-five up to the roof. It is a strong, neat building, and though it be small, yet, considering the poverty of people in these new settlements, and that the parish being sixteen miles in length, we must have two Churches in it, it is a considerable charge to that part of the parish, who have contributed cheerfully, some thirty, some fifty, and one man two hundred pounds this currency; while our neighbours of the Independent persuasion have their meeting-houses built by a tax laid by the government upon all the land in the parish. And in this parish all who go to *meeting* are exempt from paying any thing toward the support of the government, but as soon as any join in the worship of the Church of England they immediately lose that privilege. But the more we are oppressed, though there may be several professors of the Church of England, yet, I hope, we shall be the more sincere in our profession; and it is very certain that our people generally expend more by far for the support of religion than their neighbours of the dissenting persuasion.

If the venerable Society would think it reasonable to send me four dozen Common Prayer-Books, with Tate and Brady's version of the Psalms, and two dozen of the Whole Duty of Man, they should be carefully distributed among the poorer people, by,

Reverend Sir, yours,

And the venerable Society's

Most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN BEACH.

[*Rev. Mr. Lamson to the Secretary.*]

North Castle, in the Parish of Rye,

February 10th, 1746-7.

Reverend Sir,

The mission at Fairfield having become vacant by the Reverend Mr. Caner's acceptance of an invitation to Boston, the Episcopal congregation at Fairfield, by advice of the Reverend Mr. Caner, have invited me to accept that mission, if the venerable Society will be pleased to bestow it upon me at their request and mine, in which, there being such a universal concurrence, without an exception, I could not but think it an encouragement to hope that my labours among them may be attended with good success, (by the blessing of God,) and, therefore, I do cheerfully concur with them in their application to the venerable Board, that I may be removed into the Reverend Mr. Caner's place, according to the request of that Church, provided I may be allowed the same salary that Mr. Caner received. For, although Mr. Caner's benevolence and the people's purchase have provided a very decent glebe house, yet, fifty pounds sterling, added to what may be expected from the people, will not be a decent subsistence in a place where living must be more expensive than in most other country places. My present situation can't be thought a settlement, inasmuch as no house or glebe is provided, nor my support sufficient to enable me to purchase one. I have endeavoured, since my arrival, to do what service I can among a great number of poor people scattered about in the woods, who have little ability, and, most of them, as little inclination to reward me. I compassionate their circumstances, and the more, because so many of them have very little sense of the importance of religion and virtue. The Reverend Mr. Wetmore has been treating with a worthy young gentleman, Mr. Thomas Bradbury Chandler, who is willing to perform the service of a lay Catechist among these

people, if the honourable Society, upon my removal, will be pleased to bestow upon him the ten pounds sterling salary that was formerly allowed to Mr. Flint Dwight, deceased. I am of opinion that such a provision is as much as these people can expect at present, and I believe it may, in a great measure, supply the place of a minister in orders, considering that Mr. Wetmore, with Mr. Chandler's assistance to read in the Church at Rye in his absence, may more frequently visit the Churches at North Castle and Bedford, and administer the Sacraments among them. And some of the people have expressed a satisfaction in the hopes of having so ingenious a man as Mr. Chandler to labour among them in such a method after my leaving them. They find as little fault as I could expect at the talk of my removal, knowing that my present income is too small for a support. I shall be glad to know the honourable Society's resolutions, in answer to this humble request of mine and the Church at Fairfield, as soon as may be; and as that place will be the more acceptable to me for its nearness to my friends, being but eight miles from my father's house, I hope my request will be granted; which, if the venerable Society shall think fit to gratify me in, no diligence shall be wanting on my part, according to my best abilities, to serve the great designs of their charity, God's glory, and the good of immortal souls.

The sectaries will be very busy in endeavouring to seduce the people when they have no minister among them; for which reason I beg leave to repeat my urgency to have this affair considered and expedited as fast as proper, and only add my humble duty to the venerable Board, and, with hearty prayers for the success of their extensive charity,

I humbly subscribe myself,

Reverend Sir, your most obedient,

And most humble servant,

JOSEPH LAMSON.

[*Rev. Mr. Caner to the Secretary.*]

Fairfield, in New-England,

February 12th, 1746-7.

Reverend Sir,

I having lately received an invitation from the congregation of King's Chapel, in Boston, to succeed the Reverend Mr. Commissary Price, who has resigned, I take the first opportunity to ask the venerable Society's concurrence and dismission from the present service in which I am now engaged. I have long laboured under infirmities of body, which made it very difficult for me to perform the services required in such an extensive cure. The frequent colds I have taken, and disorders consequent thereon, have made traveling to me pretty much impracticable.

I humbly thank the venerable Society for their favours to me and to the people whom I have served, and because I am much concerned that the interests of religion should be carried on as well as begun here, I humbly hope the Society will agree to the request of the people of this Church (herewith transmitted) and appoint the Reverend Mr. Lamson to succeed in this place. I should conceive a good prospect of this gentleman promoting the interests of religion and piety here, from the great harmony that appears between him and this people. A custom of being indulged this way has made it matter of consequence in this part of the world, that the people should, as much as possible, be gratified in the choice of their ministers; and frequent observation has confirmed me in it, that little can be done toward the advancement of piety where a good understanding does not subsist between minister and people. I omit at this time to mention the present state of these Churches, a full account of which I propose shortly to transmit. In the mean time, I beg leave to observe that, as this Church is situated at the head of the county, a very small vacancy may prove of much disservice,

especially at this time, when very few Churches this way are supplied. One thing further I humbly move to the Society, which is, that they will be pleased to continue the full salary to this place, for, though the people are generous according to their circumstances, yet the expensiveness of the place makes the whole but a necessary support; this town, and that of New-London, being more expensive than any others in the colony.

I expect to be called upon from Boston Lady-day next; but propose to continue my labours here, with neighbouring assistance, till May or June, by which time I conceive hopes the Society will grant me a dismissal, and remove Mr. Lamson to this place. In regard to salary, I shall not presume to draw further than Lady-day next, till I have the Society's express leave how far, or to what term, I shall be indulged to draw.

The people of Fairfield, to recommend themselves as much as possible to the Society's favour, have, upon this occasion, purchased a large and convenient house, with suitable accommodations, for a parsonage house, worth about one hundred and fifty pounds sterling, and have, by the will of a charitable person, Mrs. Jerusha Sturges, lately deceased, received an addition of fifty pounds of this currency, to their bank, which I formerly made mention of. I hope, upon the whole, their honest industry and zeal will engage the Society's compassion, and the continuance of their favour, in supporting a very promising mission.

For myself, I beg leave to assure the Society that I am

Their most dutiful, most obedient

And most humble servant.

HENRY CANER.

[*Rev. Mr. Punderson to the Secretary.—Extract.*]

N. Groton, September 29th, 1747.

Reverend and dear Sir,

I have the satisfaction to inform the venerable Board, that the ministry house in New-London is nearly finished. I have contributed something, and endeavoured to my utmost to forward it.

They are building a Church in Norwich, the largest and most flourishing of any town in this colony. There are about thirty families of conformists. The town has always had the character of the most rigid Congregationalists in the government. 'Tis really surprising how much their dispositions are softened toward the Church; and, indeed, 'tis so almost every where.

Reverend Sir, yours, and the Society's

Most obedient, humble servant,

EBEN'R PUNDERSON.

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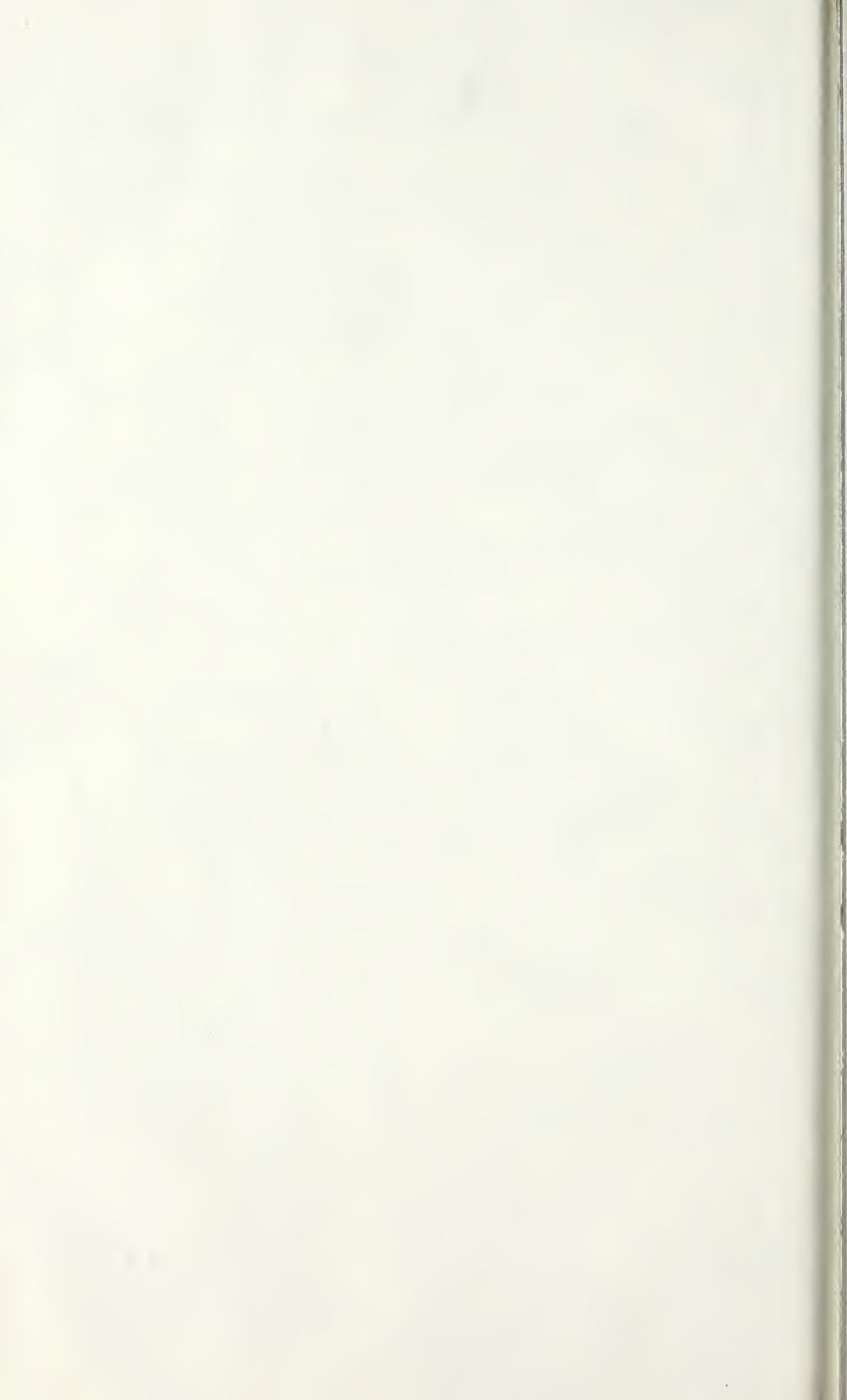
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